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OF NEW SOUTH WALES



DRAWING BY BOOTHROYD

VERSE BY P. DUNCAN-BROWN

NEW YEAR

The cycle of the year is done!
Spare a thought in passing, everyone.
If the sorrows you have left behind
Were scattered broadcast on the wind
To fall where other feet will tread
That other hearts may grieve instead.

Another year has reached its close
And I wonder if our joys were those
That lighting our hearts have lit the way
For other hearts to laugh to-day.
Let's bury pain for none to find
And just leave happiness behind.

PEOPLE in the 1934 SPOTLIGHT

Wheel of Fate Brought Honor and Glory to Many

Royal Romances ... and Tragedies

The year 1934 has been, on the whole, one of material progress. There have been no international calamities on a great scale, and despite spasmodic mutterings in Central Europe the peace of civilised nations has not been broken. In the main, the year has been one of tranquillity at home and abroad.

There have been notable events of particular interest to Australian women. It has been a year of advance in many directions — in aviation, in sport, and in domestic relations.

SOME notable women have passed away, while others, unknown or comparatively unknown a year ago, have achieved prominence on the world's stage.

Foremost among women who have caught the public eye has been the Greek Princess Marina, now the wife of the Duke of Kent, whose alliance with the English Royal House was the outstanding social event of the year.

In the 1934 New Year's Honors list appeared the names of many British and Empire public men, including five new Peers, but, following custom, no women were singled out for high distinction. The Women's Freedom League of Great Britain made a formal protest—the first of its kind—against the exclusion of women from all major awards. It will be interesting to see what influence this protest, which has the great body of English-speaking women behind it, has on future distributions.

IN the Birthday Honors in June appeared the name of Mrs. I. H. Moss, of Melbourne, president of the National Council of Women, and the only woman member of the Melbourne Centenary Celebrations Council. Mrs. Moss received the hardy and, many thought, inadequate distinction of a C.B.E.

In the field of social service Mrs. Norman Brookes, also of Victoria, was paid a signal compliment when the new wing of the Queen Victoria and Jessie Macpherson Community Hospital was named after her. She has been president of the hospital for 11 of its 37 years. Another Victorian, Mrs. Julie

Rapke, became president of the Women Citizens' Movement in that State.

The year 1934 was memorable for the entry of women into yet another field. Miss Lillian Scholes, of Melbourne, became the first woman in Victoria, and the second in Australia, to receive a Bachelor of Divinity degree with honors. It is likely that another distinction is in store for her—appointment as the first ordained woman minister of the Methodist Church.

Another Australian woman to make a niche of her own in the ladder of fame was Dr. Elma Sandford Morgan, who last month was appointed Director of Maternal and Baby Welfare in New South Wales. She is the first woman doctor in Australia to hold a Government executive position, her predecessor in the post being Dr. Morris, now Director-General of Public Health.

Among the Fliers

IN the sphere of aviation women have done notable things during the year. On May 24 Miss Jean Batten, of New Zealand, reached Darwin after a flight from England of 14 days 22 hours, thus clipping three days off the previous best flight for a woman made by Amy Johnson in 1930. Miss Batten's time is the best made by a woman between England and Australia.

Miss Freda Thompson, a young Australian aviatrix, also flew solo from



DR. DOLFUSS

England to Australia—the first Australian woman to do so.

A French aviatrix, Mlle. Boucher, established a woman's speed record of 278 miles per hour outside Paris on August 13. The same dauntless flying girl, on August 10, flew a Cedron plane at an average speed of 256 miles per hour over a 1000-metre course at Marseilles.

World of Sport

AT tennis, at cricket, and at swimming, women have raised themselves several pegs in the international sphere.

Miss Joan Hartigan, holder of the Women's Singles Championship of Australia, was chosen to represent Australia at Wimbledon this year, and worthily upheld the honor of Australian women both in Britain and Europe.

She reached the semi-finals at Wimbledon, and was ranked eighth in world players of her sex.

The visit of England's three women players, including the world's champion, Miss Dorothy Round, has given a big impetus to women's tennis in Australia, and the form of some of the locals, notably Mrs. Westacott, Miss Bickerton, and the 16-year-old Thelma Coyne, has augured well for the future of Australia in the International sphere.

Another big advance in this form of sport was achieved with the women's interstate matches in Sydney this year, Victoria winning, with New South Wales second, and Queensland third.

In swimming we have had the achieve-



PRINCESS MARINA



JEAN BATTEN

ments of Miss Claire Dennis, of New South Wales, who represented Australia at the 1934 Empire Games in England, and created a new Empire record for breast-stroke swimming. Miss Lesley Thompson won second place in the diving events.

At the beginning of the year we had the visit of the English woman champion, Miss Joyce Cooper, who charmed everyone by her personality as by her prowess in the water. It was during her visit that Miss Pat Norton, the 14-year-old Sydney girl, created a new record for the 100 yards New South Wales championship.

Famous Women Pass On

The world's greatest woman scientist, Madame Curie, discoverer, along with her husband, of the properties of radium, died in Paris on July 5. The same month saw the passing in California of another woman who had added to the glory of nations—Marie Dressler. Tens of thousands of Australians felt her death as a personal loss.

Outside Australia there have been the tragic deaths of two European rulers—Dr. Dolfuss, the Austrian Chancellor, and King Alexander of Yugoslavia—both victims to assassins' bullets.



MRS. NORMAN BROOKES



JOAN HARTIGAN



MRS. I. H. MOSS

One might mention also the passing in Turkey of that strange figure, reputedly the world's oldest man, Agha Zaro, who claimed to be 160 years old, and was probably the oldest man known to our generation.

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HANGING of Woman Is Reproach to CIVILISATION

In this season of goodwill, when the people of all civilised countries exchange gifts and good wishes, it comes as a shock to read of the execution of an Englishwoman by process of English law.

This was the fate of Mrs. Ethel Major, who was hanged at Hull on Wednesday of last week.

APPEALS for the condemned woman were in vain. She had been found guilty of poisoning her husband, the motive being jealousy of her husband's attentions to a neighbor.

Evidence at the trial was not published in Australia, but it is a fair inference that the unfortunate woman was distraught and not in a state of mind to appreciate the nature of her act.

The Mayor of Hull headed the movement for reprieve and he must have been in touch with all the circumstances. In a telegram to the Home Secretary (Sir John Gilmour) he spoke of "the heart-felt plea of Hull's 300,000 inhabitants," and mentioned the distress the prospect of her death was causing thousands of women.

It was of no avail. The British Minister did not mind, apparently, what the women thought or what Hull thought. The telegraphed appeal to the King and Queen was not permitted to reach them. That it would have made any difference is problematical, as the decision in these matters has, by long precedent, been left with the Executive.

None the less this killing by judicial process of a wretched woman is an affront to the humane sentiments of normally-minded men and women.

It is an index of advanced public opinion in these matters that prior to Mrs. Major there had been only two executions of women in England in 12 years.

The previous one was eight years ago. That was the case of Mrs. Louie Calvert, convicted of the killing by poison of a widow named Mrs. Lily Waterhouse. Mrs. Calvert was hanged at Manchester on June 24, 1926, despite the motion in her favor, moved by six Labor members in the House of Commons. The then Home Secretary (Sir William Joynson-Hicks) would listen to no plea for reprieve.

The other judicial tragedy was that of Mrs. Thompson, hanged with her lover, Bywaters, in 1922. That was a case in which hard-headed lawyers were divided over the justice or otherwise of the sentence, and the voice of English womanhood called loudly for mercy, but

the British Home Secretary, Mr. Brodric, showed none.

IN Australia there would be little sympathy at election time for a Government that, except in very extraordinary circumstances, refused mercy to a woman under sentence of death. It is more than thirty years since a woman was hanged in Australia.

In the last eight years there have only been 12 executions in this country. In the last six years New South Wales and Victoria have had only one each.

Queensland abolished capital punishment in 1923. The other States have retained it in the Statute Book, but only in very exceptional cases is it put into force. There has been no increase of murders in Queensland since the abolition of the death penalty.

Sex Difference

IT is easy to say, as many people do, that there should be no sex distinctions in law. That is well enough as a general rule, but it is known that woman's nature is more easily worked on and more vulnerable to certain impulses than that of man. That physical fact has rightly influenced most Governments in deciding whether, when convicted of crime, they shall meet death by the gallows.

It is a reproach to those responsible that the Christmas season should have been marred by this judicial slaying which adds nothing to human enlightenment and is a reproach to our vaunted civilisation.

Let's Talk Of Interesting People



YUGOSLAVIAN POLITICIAN.
MRS. SLAVKO V. GROUCH, formerly Mabel Gordon Dunlop, of Clarksburg, will hold a high place in Yugoslavia's Court due to the appointment of her husband as Marshal of the Royal Court.

So that in future Lady Astor, of England, will not be the only American-born woman to win a high place in European politics. Mme. Grouich is, like her husband, keenly interested in all political matters and in all things that may lead to the amelioration and betterment of social conditions.

She says that she and her husband will invoke Abraham Lincoln's principles of equality in an effort to bring real national unity among the divergent racial and religious groups in Yugoslavia.



APPOINTED TO SENATE.

MISS FANNY COHEN has the unique distinction, for a woman, of having just been selected by the Government of N.S.W. as one of their appointees to the Senate of Sydney University.

Miss Cohen, who is headmistress of Fort Street Girls' High School, after graduating with first-class honors in mathematics, took her M.A. at Sydney University. Then, for a period, she became demonstrator and lecturer in crystallography. This was followed by a trip to Cambridge on her winning (she was the first woman to achieve this honor) the Barker Travelling Scholarship.

On her return to Sydney, Miss Cohen became, in turn, assistant-mistress at Fort Street, deputy and acting-headmistress at North Sydney Girls' High School, headmistress at West Maitland, headmistress at St. George Girls' High School, Kogarah, and headmistress at Fort Street Girls' High School.



BUILDER AND CONTRACTOR.

MRS. HORACE STEVENS, of Melbourne, who a few weeks ago married the well-known singer, is now honeymooning in Sydney, is, as far as she knows, the only woman builder and contractor in the Commonwealth. And, although many people still insist on asking, "Is your father in?" when calling to do business with "E. Hallam" (Mrs. Stevens' name before her recent marriage), they soon learn to respect the brains of the slim little woman builder.

Mrs. Stevens' hobbies are riding and gardening. She does not know whether she will be able to continue her career after marriage, although she hopes to persuade her husband to settle in Australia.

THE FIRM of "You & Co." HOLDS ITS Annual MEETING

What Resolutions Will You Put Before Your Four Directors?

By F. W. L. ESCH

The time has arrived for the annual general meeting of the firm of "You and Co."

It is the only business in the world in which each individual is completely bound up, and though most of us do not attach much importance to the directors' annual report, and many of us do not listen to it at all, we are all dependent on the good or bad management of the firm.

FOUR directors attend the annual general meeting of "You & Co." besides yourself. There is the Director of Machinery and Equipment, who answers for the efficiency of your body; the Director of Works, who is responsible for your task in life; the Director of Social Relations, whose duty it is to watch your dealings with other people; and the Director of Future Affairs, whose job it is to plan ahead and prepare for what is going to happen next.

On the list of matters to be brought up before the board for discussion are various pertinent questions relating to these four important departments of "You & Co."

As Chairman of Directors you will address each director in turn, hear their reports, and submit recommendations for discussion by the board.

You will examine the Director of Machinery and Equipment as follows:

Have you enjoyed good health during the year?

If not, how much of your indifferent health has been your own fault?

Do you take enough exercise?
Do you eat the right kinds of food?

Have you any bad habits which affect your general health?

Do you sleep too much or too little?

In this department of machinery and equipment you may have to "write off" certain wear and tear of the body as a dead loss. But your board will have to face the situation as it stands and be prepared to start the new year, in many cases, with definite handicaps.

You can console yourself with the thought that many great people have done great things with poor health.

Your Daily Task

The Director of Works will be examined on these points:

In your daily work (whatever it is) are you satisfied that you have done your best?

Do you do it well, or are you always doing it badly?

Have your efforts improved at all during the last year?

Do you like your daily duties more, or less, than you did before?

There will be many varieties of discussion arising from these queries, according to who you are. You may not be satisfied with your work, you may want to make progress and "get on," you may want to make more money.

At the general meeting of "You & Co." this item is always the signal for one of those "scenes" characteristic of all board meetings, when everyone gets excited and starts talking at once.

The Director of Machinery will complain that you are worked such long hours, you do not have time to take proper exercise, and that you do not earn enough to pay for medical overhauls.

The Director of Future Affairs may complain that there is no future in your work. And the Director of Social Relations may say that your work leaves you no time or energy to make and keep friends.

Out of all this chaos you have to restore perspective and order. You must point out to the board that things could be worse.

If the Director of Works complains that your task in life is really unsuitable and unbecoming, and that you are unhappy in your work, then you must make other plans which, of course, will come under the control of the Director of Future Affairs.

If house-work is your task and it leaves you bored and unhappy, you must plan to take up some hobby.

THIS brings the meeting of "You & Co." to the Director of Future Affairs, whose task it is to plan ahead. Some people are quite happy not planning ahead at all—or so they say. They are very lucky because in the



OUR photographer's idea of the annual meeting of the firm of "You & Co." It will be seen that the directors look a little apathetic.

proprietary company of "You & Co." the sum total of your happiness, per annum, is your net profit, and you may be excused for not worrying how you obtain it, providing it is represented in large quantities on the right side of the ledger.

For most people, however, happiness is hard to attain because of a general dissatisfaction with the conditions of "You & Co." In very many cases it is because the Director of Future Affairs is not doing the job properly, with the result that you haven't the foggiest notion what you want from life or how you are going to go about getting it.

All the directors are lazy, indolent, and bored—but this one is the worst of the lot.

To the Director of Future Affairs you put these questions:

Are you just drifting along, or have you some plans for the future?

If you came into a million pounds to-morrow, what would you do?

Can you write down ten important headings for things you want, in ten minutes?

Women's Ambition

FOR quite a number of women, Future Affairs must be interwoven with the duties of the director of Social Relations because, unless a woman is in business, her plans, in most cases, will be social.

Social Relations is an important department of "You & Co." and, being one of the most troublesome, it is a great destroyer of happiness.

You will present this director with the following questions:

Have you helped anybody during last year?

Have you lost any friends?

Have you made any enemies?

Do you run people down behind their backs?



false happiness you don't possess, or they debit you with huge amounts of artificial gloom.

Your first task is to strike a true balance and find out how you really do stand. When you have done this, you will be in a position to pass some worthwhile resolutions for the coming year.

How often do you quarrel?

Are you always worrying about what other people are thinking of you?

Do you include the opposite sex as people, or do you put them in another class to be treated according to a separate standard of values?

Likewise, do you place husbands, wives, and relatives in a different class to be treated according to different standards to other people?

Do you treat people the way you expect to be treated by them?

Nailing Them Down

DON'T imagine for one moment that the directors of "You & Co." are going to take all these questions sitting down. There will be much "jumping to the feet" in protestation, and a good deal of strong objection to the implications behind every question.

The directors will either paint a too glowing picture of events in their respective departments, or they will tell too pathetic a tale of woe.

If things have been going well you will find them quick to admit it has been through the good management of "You & Co."; but if things have been going badly, they will all claim it has been through bad luck.

They will stoutly deny the suggestion that there has been any bad management.

You need have no hesitation in haranguing them as the laziest, most indolent and inefficient lot of directors that ever disgraced a board meeting.

You will be safe in telling them that they do not stick to their jobs constantly enough, and that they are always misrepresenting conditions, and faking the books.

Either they credit you with a lot of

Run a Home Gallery of Photographic Art..Beautiful and Topical!

THE modern trend for Home Decoration, probably through the influence of the "films," is all in favor of photographic art.

The heavy blacks, chaste whites, and serene greys of camera studies are effective in the extreme, and beautiful subjects are legion.

THE PHOTOGRAPHS reproduced in The Australian Women's Weekly are often such an unusually high standard of attractiveness and artistic value that readers must at times feel the urge to possess those with a particularly strong appeal.

At the cost of, say, a couple of visits to the "pictures," you may include in a private gallery of your chosen photo. You will want to make a collection of them and ring the changes on them at will.

The Australian Women's Weekly Photographs

May be obtained at the following rates on application to Photo Department, The Australian Women's Weekly.

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10 x 8	2/6	3/-
12 x 10	3/-	3/6

Larger sizes on application.

RIDICULOUS Red TAPE OVER Maternity BONUS

Government Saving on Smaller Payments Swallowed by Extra Cost of Administration

By Our Special Commissioner.

Time was when the granting and collection of a maternity bonus was a simple and straightforward affair. On the birth of the child, the mother filled in a form, sent in her application, and promptly received her £5—the amount a grateful country awarded her for having produced an asset, a citizen. There was a minimum of fuss, of delay, or of clerical work.

But times have changed. To-day only those with a family income not exceeding £4 a week may claim the maternity bonus, but it is no longer £5—only £4.

Under this new ruling, the country may certainly save on the number of claims paid, but any saving in this direction is speedily swallowed up in the extra cost of the departmental clerical work, for the red tape surrounding the process from the time the mother first makes her claim till she receives the money must constitute a record, even for our Government.

OFTEN seven to ten weeks may elapse between the birth of the child and the payment of the money. Perhaps the baby or the mother

And we talk so glibly of the declining birth-rate and the great value of infant life! Sheer hypocrisy!

Rainbow of Papers

AT the birth of the child the mother must secure and fill up three papers—a yellow one (the child's registration form), a green one (the mother's claim for bonus), and a pink one (the certificate of the doctor or nurse who attended the birth)—quite an attractive rainbow selection.

These are then sent in, and naturally all these details must be entered up in the department's books—work for several.

Next, the department sends back two forms which the claimant must fill in. The questionnaire includes—how much the parents have earned for the past twelve months, and how much each employer paid either wife or husband. If a man or his wife are merely casual workers, they need to be experienced bookkeepers to satisfy the department as to where all the little amounts came from, and who betide the applicant who makes a slight error!

Like Exam. Paper

The most impossible question of all is "Do you expect the wage (of husband or wife) to decrease or increase?" Alas, they cannot see into their employer's mind and discover whether he intends in the next six months to raise the wages or perhaps sack the worker altogether.



IT LOOKS as though some Mickey Mouse admirers intend sending a gift to the "Man in the Moon." The world's most popular actor has been turned into a balloon 40 feet high, and 23 feet wide, and Mickey is on a visit to Hollywood to get Papa Walt Disney's approval on his sudden growth before going to New York as a feature for Christmas celebrations.

Lack of Co-operation

IF the department would only co-operate with the public hospitals a great number of these difficulties and delays could be minimised and dishonest claims quickly discovered, but this the department steadily refuses to do.

Sometimes, too, the claim for bonus is disallowed, but the Government department declines to notify the hospital of this. So the hospital is completely in the dark as to whether it is possible to recoup itself for assistance given at a critical moment.

Consequently the hospitals are slowly being obliged to be less sympathetic than they wish to be merely because the Government department will not work with them. Mothers unwilling to pay are few and far between, but many are in dire need, and it should be possible for them to get the baby bonus quickly while the mother is weak and the baby young—not a couple of months later.

Is it not the same old story?—the belief that it is economy to take the money from one and give it to another? The truth is, that thousands of worthy mothers have been deprived of the bonus, their lives made harder, and their children ill fed. Thousands more wait an unconscionable time for their money, and all that has been achieved is that some more clerks have secured employment, departmental routine is appeased, and humane methods are banished from the administration of the department which attends to the maternity bonuses.

Probably the employer himself does not know—but the Maternity Bonus Department wishes to know—and who can tell them?

In addition, the number of children already living and particulars about them must be supplied. Red tape must be served!

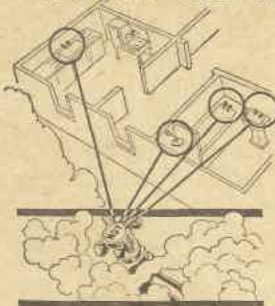
The poor, harassed parents do their best to fill in this examination paper, swear before witnesses that it is true, and return it once again to the department, wondering when the bonus money will arrive. Oh! Not yet. All these answers must be entered up—more clerical work—and then all the employers of either wife or husband must be communicated with to find out if they really did employ Mr. and/or Mrs. X, and how much they paid them.

Just think of this delay and the office work it entails!

But the Government cannot pay yet—oh, no! It must now send to the Registrar of Births and find out if Mrs. X really had the children she said she had, if she has rightly stated their ages, and so on.

Finally, weeks and weeks having elapsed, and all the above papers having gone a fine amount of travelling from department to department and from Government to claimant, the claim is perhaps at last acknowledged and the mother eventually gets the bonus—several weeks after the birth of the baby and after several pounds have been expended by the Government on postage, paper, and labor.

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30 " " " " 11s. 6d. " "
40 " " " " 13s. 6d. " "

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CASH PRIZES for New Year WISHES

A Clever Thought May Win Reward

The Australian Women's Weekly is offering £50 in prizes for the best New Year wishes sent in by our readers.

The competition is a simple one, and there is no entrance fee or other conditions than those set out as follows.

THE great festival of Christmas and the passing of a year inspire Christian people the world over to kindly thoughts of others.

Just as Dickens' immortal Scrooge felt the urge of Christmas, so to-day do we remember, at least once a year, to send a goodwill message to our friends and relations, and wish them the best that life has to offer.

The Australian Women's Weekly would foster this sentiment and wants to hear of the New Year wishes of its thousands of readers.

In this competition there will be the following prizes:

First prize of twenty-five guineas.

Second prize of five guineas.

Third prize of three guineas.

30 consolation prizes of half a guinea each for the 30 entries selected by the judges as next in order of merit.

No wish could exceed in nobility and grandeur the divine injunction, "Peace on earth, goodwill to men." What a wonderful thought is expressed in those few words!

Readers who have been following P. O. Wren's novel, "Beggars' Horrors," in The Australian Women's Weekly, will remember that each of the six principal characters was granted a wish of his heart—one desired unbounded wealth, another courage, another happiness, one long life, another health, and the last great strength.

Some of these wishes may appeal to you. Others may not. They may at least guide you in preparing your New Year wish which is the subject of this competition.

No member of the staff of The Australian Women's Weekly is eligible for this competition, and entrants must understand that the editor's decision is final.

The wish may be a personal one or may relate to friends and relatives or to the world in general. It should be clearly written on a sheet of newspaper and forwarded so as to reach P. O. Box No. 137CC not later than 5 p.m. on Jan. 10.

HOST HOLBROOK says: No sugar is used in brewing my vinegar. I call it Holbrook's Pure Malt Vinegar.***

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LESLIE

AS IF HE CARED

Wherein "the other woman" enters, and a man and a girl meet a problem as old as humanity... and as full of heartbreak as it ever was!

Carol stood like a girl made of marble.
She looked at Julian Matrick, she
looked at Thelma.

FOR settlement calls Carol did not wear the flying white cap and the starched apron of the Slade Hospital Training School. She wore a dark blue coat and skirt and a scarf that tied under her chin and a close little hat which she pulled down over the silver-yellow of her hair. Wherever she went, the hospital satchel went with her; the black bag filled with instruments and dressings and drugs that was recognized all over the East Side and that had the insignia of the hospital on its side.

This out-patient duty was part of every nurse's training, and about most of the training-school Mrs. Stokel, who was in charge of the Bag Room, felt practically no anxiety. Mrs. Stokel had been at Slade for twenty years and her eyes had seen much. She knew that bag of money was a shield and buckler. Thus she lived at peace with circumstances until Carol's face took to wandering, chaperoned only by her bag, down the Bowery or under the shadow of Brooklyn Bridge. And that, it seemed to Mrs. Stokel, was just asking for trouble.

"Carol's late this evening," she would say to Mr. Ogilvie through the wire netting which locked him in with his case histories.

"What's she on?"
"That Pattarini case."

"Carol'll be along all right," Mr. Ogilvie would tell her. "Carol gives every patient three times the attention they deserve—that's the trouble. Has Dr. Howes sent in his report yet?"

Eventually Carol would arrive, looking tired and lovely and triumphant. Usually she remembered to bring an evening paper for Mr. Ogilvie.

"Tough going?" Mrs. Stokel would ask, looking at her sharply.

"Rather," Carol would say in her voice like running water. And Mrs. Stokel would know before she looked in the bag that every inch of dressing and bandage had been used, and both cans of chloroform and the hypodermic and the stimulants.

"Guess between you you pulled her through all right," Mrs. Stokel would say, no matter which of the doctors had been on the case. For Carol was turning out to be a marvellous nurse. She said hardly anything, and she made no idle gestures, and she never lied to the patients and everybody loved and trusted her and obligingly tried to get well for her.

CAROL had a fortnight's vacation at Easter time, and she came back looking as though she carried a lighted taper within her. Mrs. Stokel and Mr. Ogilvie stared at her. It seemed unbelievable that anyone could look so radiant. That lasted three days. Then one night she came in, silent, from the Pavese case. She looked more dead than alive; grim and wan and empty. Like a memory, like a little ghost.

The Out-patient Department had known for months that Rosa Pavese—who refused to come into the wards—was destined to be a troublesome case.

Mrs. Stokel leaned across her counter and laid a hand on Carol's shoulder. "Don't look like that," she said. "You did all you could."

"Rosa was marvellous," said Carol. "She was sound asleep when I left." Then she added: "The baby weighed ten pounds."

After a moment Mrs. Stokel took her hand from Carol's shoulder. So it wasn't Rosa, it wasn't work that was doing this to Carol.

"Those wops!" said Mrs. Stokel fiercely, not that she had anything against them. She pulled Carol's bag over for refilling. "They're keeping dinner hot for you in there," she said. Carol said, "I don't want dinner."

"Of course you do! Go in and eat your good dinner!"

"No, I don't want dinner," said Carol. She stood still, as though she could not walk away.

Through his grating Mr. Ogilvie's little monkey-face spoke: "The switchboard's been trying to get you for the last hour. An outside call."

Carol's fingers played with a

on her jacket. "I don't want any outside calls," she said.

Mr. Ogilvie looked after her as she left, with the expression on his face wavering and changing about. "Carol don't act natural," he said. "There's something wrong."

"She had no business getting herself engaged to a society man," Mrs. Stokel muttered, crossly dumping Carol's bag.

"Society man" was not a complete description of Julian Matrick, and Mrs. Stokel knew it. What she simply could not bear, what made her very soul tremble to think of, was that Carol should have become engaged to "one of those bankers." That weighed on her. For Mrs. Stokel was a natural enemy of every profession except that of medicine.

"What's Carol got in common any more with all that idle lot?" she demanded.

Mr. Ogilvie, distressed, dipped a pen into his inkwell. "Carol don't look happy," he said. "No, she don't."

Mrs. Stokel handed the waiting bag to Carol next morning. Carol might have slept, but she did not look it. She might have breakfasted—but very likely she had had only black coffee.

"You've got no new cases to-day," Mrs. Stokel said. "You stop and eat a decent lunch and report here before five. Hear me?"

"Darling! Of course!" said Carol. She understood that Mrs. Stokel was mothering her. Carol could not remember her own mother.

"You always promise!" chattered Mr. Ogilvie. "Why don't you do it once, Carol? Why've you got to stop and take care of every sick cat you run into?"

But Carol had vanished from the solicitous watchfulness of family life which that pair of unrelated strangers—Mrs. Stokel and Mr. Ogilvie—managed to create in the white-and-chromium coldness of the Slade Hospital. She went out into the bright wash of sunlight and Second Avenue. It was the first delicious sun of early April. But Carol did not feel the sun. A wagon filled with hyacinths went by. But Carol closed her heart to hyacinths.

"Look what Tony Pavese left for you," said Mr. Ogilvie when she got in that evening. "He says Rosa's doing fine."

Carol looked. Attired in lavender blossoms and green leaves a hyacinth plant reared its loveliness in the stiff, hard, chilly discomfort of the Bag Room. Carol thought longingly of gardens.

"You keep it, Mr. Ogilvie," she said, "for the hyacinths."

"I hear you are engaged," said young Dr. Phil Howes late the next day. He sat on the floor of the ambulance and counted the drops of chloroform that fell on the gauze-covered cage he held over the patient's nose. He wore a trench coat over his white ducks, and when his eyes weren't otherwise occupied, he kept them on Carol's face, though he knew every freckle and feature of it by heart. Of course he knew them. He had seen Carol grow up. He had persuaded her to enter training when the family fortune had gone out like a light and her father with it.

"Yes," said Carol. The ambulance shrieked its way through the startled traffic.

"Why," asked Dr. Howes, "do you look as though you were having an

Complete Short
Story

— BY —

Teresa Hyde
PHILLIPS

operation without anaesthetic? Is being engaged as bad as all that?"

"It's bad."

"I hear this cluck Matrick comes equipped with absolutely everything."

"Yes, he does," said Carol. "Everything."

Her face set like a light in the gloom of the ambulance. A light in the darkness.

"I'd like to punch him on the nose," said Dr. Howes bitterly. He felt his patient's skin, counted her pulse. All right. He stared past Carol into the street, but it was no use. Even out there he saw nothing but her little quiet hands and her steady mouth in a steady face.

"Why couldn't you have loved me, Carol? I'm no prize package, I'll admit; but, gosh, we could've had a swell life!"

"I don't know," said Carol. She held on tight to the brass handle that kept one steady in the ambulance, held on to bare reality. "I had to fall in love with the prince in the fairy-tale. Didn't I?"

Dr. Howes, when they stopped, went

off with the stretcher. Carol went through another door into the Bag Room.

"I'm early to-day," said Carol. Apparently Mrs. Stokel had grown suddenly deaf. She did not hear Carol. But someone who stood motionless and calm on Carol's side of the counter reached down and took the bag from her and put it on the counter.

Carol took a deep breath. She stood quite still for a moment, looking too thin, looking as though she needed a lot of food and sleep. Looking terribly young and vulnerable. By turning her head a little Carol could see Mrs. Stokel being busy. Mr. Ogilvie becoming part of his records. But she did not turn her head to the man, though he was infinitely better to look at than Mrs. Stokel or Mr. Ogilvie. It was as though on this wistful April evening, into this corner of the city devoted solely to the harsh necessities of life, Park Avenue, so richly north, had suddenly propelled itself. For this man looked Park Avenue, he stood Park Avenue, he dressed Park Avenue. Carol stared at the bags, and down at her uniform, and most of all at Mrs. Stokel, who was Slade Hospital. Then she turned and marched towards the swinging door that led to the elevators.

The man followed her. As though he did not care whether she invited him or not. As though he did always what he pleased, completely calm and at his ease. Very notable he looked walking beside Carol, not giving a damn for looking notable. Not tall; slow and violent and dark, with grey eyes that said "You can go to hell if you don't like it." And somehow you knew he knew a lot about success and trouble and luck.

Carol stopped at the elevator. "I can't think," she said, "why you are here. As if you loved me. As if it were fun to pretend any longer."

"And why," he asked, and nobody in the world had ever been able to make even a guess at what thoughts were passing behind his grey eyes, "why should I pretend?"

"I don't know. I only know that you have pretended. Right along."

He looked at her, the lovely little white face so severe in profile.

"We're not engaged any longer," Carol went on. "Let's just forget we ever were, in the most decent and civilized and bearable way we can. . . . It was a mistake. It's lucky that we found out before we were married."

"Exactly what have we found out?" "That you still love Thelma," said Carol.

"How did we find that out?"

"I suppose you found it out from seeing her again. All men do. Everybody loves Thelma. You can't go near her without forcing your way through crowds of men scrambling just to look at her."

"Yes, Thelma is only comfortable in crowds. How did you find out?" His eyes were suddenly extraordinarily clear, missing nothing.

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TIME to KILL

A Drama of the Tropics . . . By
URSULA BLOOM



THE sea was very clear, too clear, so the sailors said. The sky above was dark with clouds, it seemed to hang low, as though it were shutting you in. The world was still and expectant, with an ominous tenseness about it, as though at any moment, something undreamt of by man, known only to the elements, would let itself loose like a hell fury.

The ship moved slowly among these small islands. There were dozens of them scattered about, some only a mile or so apart, surrounded by fringes of palm trees, coral coves, and sandy beaches. Lois, leaning over the taffrail, reviewed them with approval.

"Wonder what it would be like to be wrecked on one of them?" she asked. She had thought Hal was beside her. Hal, who was her artist husband of a few months. The two of them had come on this journey as a honeymoon. Three months in a tramp steamer, the most they could afford, and it had been a marvellous trip.

Both of them painted, and they had come out here for copy. Well, they'd got it! Colors you never dreamt of, colors you only longed to snatch.

"I dream in color, think in color, live in color," she told herself; "surely there has never been so much before."

She had thought that Hal stood beside her. It was not he. It was Dave Gray, the second mate. From the first she had hated the man, she did not know why. He was tall and big with a vague and sinister darkness about him, the very antithesis of Hal, who was clean and sun-bronzed and definitely English. Dave wasn't English; there was something dago about him, and the other officers did not like him. The whole crew resented his manner.

"It's his last trip with us," the captain had told them, one night when they were sitting in the little cabin lit by a swinging lamp. "He's unpopular. Some of us think he's mad."

"He looks queer," Hal had said. "He is queer," Lois had answered.

My Favorite Poem

Chinese Folk-Song

I pulled the blossoms from the bough
To make thee fair;
They died before the night, and now
My tree stands bare.
The time of oranges will bring
My tears again;
I gave the promises of spring,
In vain, in vain!

Sent in by Mrs. H. Propsting,
357 Alfred St., North Sydney.

She feared him more than all the others. Perhaps it was because she was the only woman on board, and knew her danger. Perhaps it was because his eyes said wicked things that only a woman can read.

"You imagine it, darling," Hal had suggested.

Sex swelling up within her warned her of the danger of Dave. Intuition told her. Now, she found him beside her, still, sinister, as ominous as the elemental world which lay all around them.

"To be wrecked on a desert island with you," he said, and he laughed. "It would be good fortune indeed."

"You may mean that to be complimentary, but I don't care for it." "We should be picked up, soon enough, a month at most. These islands are on the trade route."

"A month would be too long," she told him, and because she was afraid of prolonging the conversation, she turned and went to her cabin.

It was desperately hot, desperately still. On his bunk Hal was lying, painting.

"Something working up," he said.

"A storm, perhaps?"

"Typhoon, monsoon? Do they get those things in this part of the globe?"

The answer came from the heavens themselves. There was the shattering roar of thunder; at the same moment the lightning forked jaggedly into the cabin, as though a white-hot poker spiked the air. There was the sound of water, not mere rain-drops, but great

sprouts on the deck awning, on the deck itself. The sea in an instant was lashed into the dark fury of response.

"My God," said Hal, and caught her to him.

"Hal, we shall all go down!"

"Nonsense, these men are used to this sort of thing. They'll see after us."

Yet even then with the rising and falling of the ship, with the screaming of the beams, the groaning and the reeling, and the sound of the water splitting down and the sea rising up, he wasn't sure.

"Perhaps," he said, after a little while, "we ought to go on deck?"

"Hal, I'm frightened." She was ashamed of her weakness, but she knew she could not conquer it.

They went along the alleyway, clinging to each other, flung against the ship's sides, and they came on to the deck, to see the islands blotted out in darkness, and shattered by fierce red fire, the destroying lightning. A sailor, passing them, screamed to them to put on lifebelts. Confusion—darkness and redness mingling.

It happened in the instant. One crash, one vivid fork of flame that seemed to split them in two. Even while she fumbled at the lifebelt the deck under her went, and she was in the water itself.

INSTINCT made her clutch; instinct made her keep her hold of Hal. A spar floated by—a man screamed to them. She saw a boat for an instant, but it disappeared again. Only the lifebelts kept them up. How long it lasted she did not know. Suddenly she knew the storm was gathering its dark cloak about it and disappearing into the distance with the amazing suddenness of all such storms. Within touch was a plank; she clawed it and levered herself up. Hal beside her. Both were gasping, and the remains of her lifebelt were sagging from under her arms. She turned to him.

"Hal, Hal . . ."

"What's become of the others? This was sheer luck. Lois, I believe we're saved."

In that moment there was only the thankfulness for life, not even a thought for the necessities of existence which would be needed. She said, after a few dazed moments, "Where are we going? What can we do?"

"Heading for that island . . ." and she saw it just ahead: a long, thin island, with palm trees that rose like giant birds against the sky.

The ship had disappeared; wreckage was drifting on the swelling seas. In the distance a lifeboat was heading for another island.

"They'll all be picked up, I expect," said Hal, and then suddenly, "look—look ahead!"

She looked sharply—a man was swimming tiredly, his dark arms rising out of the troubled water. In his right hand there was the gleam of a knife, silver against the sea. He seemed to be falling, and only just in time Hal stooped across the plank and hauled him up to safety.

She bent over him, and recognised him as being David Gray. She said, a little hysterically, "Look, Hal, it is that man. Look!"

But Hal only saw him as a fellow-being needing help. He was paddling with his hands for the beach. It was such a little way now. A large wave bore them on its crest; cast them high up on white, smooth sand ringed by a belt of coconut palms.

"At last," he said.

It was a long time before Dave Gray opened his eyes. He lay there on the hot sand, panting for breath. Then he blinked a little, looked at Lois.

"Well, so the dream has come true," he said.

She knew what he meant, and turned her head away.

"You're a lucky chap," said Hal.

"Only hauled you in in the nick of time."

Dave leered at Hal.

"Three of us saved," he said, and he gave a little chuckle as he glanced at Lois. "Three of us. One too many, eh?"

Hal ignored it. "The others must have got away to different islands. There are dozens dotted about here. Odd we three should all wash up together." She thought desperately, "Oh, why was it Dave? He, of all the crew?"



Illustrated by
FISCHER

The knife dripped scarlet. She knew that she winced, knew that the eyes watching her were quite mad.

Three of them on the island, and it might be a month or six weeks before they were picked up. A lot can happen in that length of time. Three of them, and one too many. Surely Hal would understand, and not think that she was imagining things?

The men made a shelter out of branches and the plank and some of the wreckage that was washed up. It never looked like hardship, and a ship might be along at any time.

"A good thing that this is a harmless little island," said Hal later.

"It isn't harmless. There's Dave, and the fact that I am a woman." She hid her face on his shoulder. "Oh my dear, do try not to be quite so nice and British and sporting about it . . . there is going to be tragedy here if we are not careful."

He looked worried for a moment, then he said, "No use crossing bridges till we come to them. We shall be picked up in a week or two."

He just didn't or wouldn't understand, she believed, and she let it go.

The evening came up cooler, and the fierce sun abated, they went out looking for turtles on the white beaches. Dave seemed to be an ordinary man, and she wondered if Hal had been right after all, and she had been wrong. He showed them how to get turtles, how to get coconuts, how to knot branches together. He knew poisonous herbs from harmless ones.

Lois slept that night in the shelter of the hut they had built for her. Yet half the time she was aware of a hulk on the beach, the hulk of Dave Gray, and somehow . . . it might have been her imagination . . . but she fancied that two eyes watched her.

She was growing nervy. It was reaction from the shock, and she must not give way she told herself. It was for such a little while, six weeks at the most.

NEXT morning she was angry with herself for getting nervous. Dave made the fire for them early. He went into the interior of the thin strip of island, and came back laden with small golden bananas.

"Nothing like fresh fruit," he said. "What about these?" she asked, and showed him the dark little berries which grew in festoons, and which she wanted to taste.

"Tasteless," he told her, "and deadly poison. The natives get rid of unwanted wives that way. Almost impossible to detect. Wish the same grew in England, it would empty the divorce courts, and be much more satisfactory," and he laughed.

That night he brought a turtle, killing it with his knife and bringing it back for them.

"You see," said Hal, "he is a friend; a good thing we came across him. He knows this country well, and says we may be picked up any time. Traders are past repeatedly. We've arranged to signal for help with my shirt."

"Perhaps I was wrong," she admitted, but the woman's instinct within her told her that it was not so.

Perhaps it was the sun that did it. She noticed it again three days later, when she woke from an afternoon sleep. He was sitting beside her under the palms, watching the heat haze on the sea. His eyes were deeply malignant and his hands furtively plucked at her frock.

"Supposing there were just the two of us here?" he asked.

"Supposing what?" She felt a queer pricking in her throat, like a little frightened pulse.

"How would you feel if we were quite alone? Quite alone?"

"I'd hate it."

"I might make you love it. I might have my own way."

She saw the flash in his eyes, felt his hand taking hers possessively. How

strong he was. The strength terrified her.

"Please don't," she protested, and felt her mouth going dry with that sick fear.

Instantly he released her, muttered an apology and getting up, strode away. She knew that the latent something was there. Knew that he felt passion for her, the urging passion for possession. Six weeks would be too long. The tension must snap. Little scenes, little moments, like flashlights upon a diseased brain, warned her. Moments when she saw the look in his eyes, sinister and mocking, felt his hand purposely touch hers, compelling her—saw him finger his knife almost menacingly.

The worst scene of all was that night. It had been very hot, and, unable to sleep, she lay across the opening to the hut, watching the moon.

Suddenly she was aware of a shadow, creeping up the beach, like some wild animal, something ugly and hunched, something that was all beast.

She told herself that she was dreaming. She tried to scream, but fear paralysed her. Then fascinated, yet sick with fear, she saw that it was Dave, crawling clumsily towards her. His head blocked the entrance, and he was staring into the darkness with eyes that glittered like an animal. Instinctively she knew that he was looking for her. She could see his big body, feel his eyes on hers, his breath coming quickly, and she knew that he was worse than any marauding beast that might have come to their hut.

She gave a quick little scream of terror. It was the only sound that she was capable of making in that paralyzing moment. Instantly he withdrew.

She told Hal, sobbing it out in the dawn.

"You dreamt it, darling," he said, though his eyes were strangely old. But she had not dreamt it.

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PIRATE LOWER on the SPANISH MAIN

When We Hid Our Treasure
and Lost the Map!

A BOLD BUCCANEER

AVAST!! (Eh?) I said, AVAST!! (A vast what?) Shut up! Yo, yo! and a bottle of gum. I've just received my income tax assessment and it reminds me of the good old days when I, too, was a pirate.

Yes, girls, little Lennie was once a pirate and sailed the high seas. The seas were much higher in those days than they are now.

MANY'S the galleon I've sunk. Galleons and galleons of them. The moment I sighted a Spaniard I'd board him—thirty shillings a week and soft washing.

The loot I used to get! Gold plate, doubloons (they're not worn now), pieces of eight; sometimes I even got pieces of nine.

One day I was sharpening my cutlass when the look-out man cried out, "Rot me for a land-hibbering wowsie if I don't see a galleon in the distance, Captain!"

"Heave to!" I shouted. "Be-lay! Whoa!"

Which was done.

Every man took a cannon and was given orders not to shoot until they saw the whites of their eyes. "What if one of 'em's got bloodshot eyes?" said one of my merry men. "Don't shoot him," replied my bosun, Long John Saliva, "he's probably shot already."

Long John Saliva was one of the best pirates I've ever worked with. He was tattooed all over. Even his tonsils had "I love Maggie" on them in three colors.

We were nearing the galleon. "Bait the grappling irons," I said in a tense voice.

By
L. W. Lower
Australia's Foremost
Humorist
Illustrated by
Wep

BOOM! (cannons). BOOM! BOOM! (more cannons). TINKLE! TINKLE! (very inferior Spanish cannons). We boarded her, cutlasses to hand and fighting like reckless demons, little devils that we were.

Dividing the Loot

A PROUD Spanish Don, capping me from the bridge of his crippled ship, said, "By Crikey! It's Bully wert!" in Spanish. Then he gave in. We got fifteen chests of doubloons and things, and four fair maidens, which I threw back because I already had an island full of them, and a couple of wristlet watches and a lot of odds and ends.

It was very troublesome dividing the two wristlet watches between the crew. Being the captain, I got a main spring, but there was a lot of heart-burning and jealousy for some time afterward.



There were always arguments about burying the treasure.

Well, after hanging a few prisoners from the yard-arm we hoisted sail, and the men, who had been served with a tot of rum, were in high spirits.

I smiled as I gazed down at them from the poop. They were singing that rousing old song, "Now Drake Was an Animal Brave and Bold." You know, the one where he beats Von Tramp, or Vin Blanc, or whatever his name was.

After a while they became quarrelsome, so I said to myself, "I shall deal one of those oafs a buffet which will sort ill with his liking, egad!" Just like that. Then I waded into them. They were a sorry crew when I'd finished with them. When I coughed, they leapt into the air and whimpered.

I got home covered with glory and green parrots. But not without some trouble, mark you.

There were always arguments about burying the treasure. The idea was simply to bury the treasure, make a plan of the spot, and then lose the plan. Sounds simple enough, but you've no idea of the complication that arose. I used to have a mutiny three times a day, and the last time I got so fed up I said, "All right! If you won't behave yourselves I'll take my share and get off the boat and walk home." That quelled them.

I got tired of the life after a few years. It was too monotonous. I left the sea and retired to my little cottage in the woods with my trusty benchman, Long John Saliva, there to end my declining years in peaceful contemplation of the long, long ago.

I have a few old, blood-stained maps for sale, very cheap. Make good New Year presents. All the places on the maps are far away. Give one to your time-payment collector.

"Most People Unobservant"

Is the average person observant?

Scientists have found that generally speaking most people are unobservant—they see, but not with the inward eye.

LITTLE tests are most interesting. People walk up and down steps every day, know exactly where they are situated, but never know how many there are. People look up at the G.P.O. clock, mentally record the time thousands of times within the course of a year, yet, if asked what kind of numerals are used on the face could not tell you.

Men and women have been known to wear watches for 30 years, and yet never know what kind of numerals are on the face. How many people wearing lace-up shoes know how many eyelets the laces go through?

There are dozens of these little tests which readers will find interesting for their own personal examination. Inattention is largely the cause of the unobservant spirit. Deafness has been attributed to it.

A well-known psychologist believes that fully one-half of the deafness that exists is the result of inattention.

SOUNDS may be distinctly heard when the attention is directed towards them, that in ordinary circumstances would be imperceptible. And people often fail to hear what is said to them because they are not paying attention.

He quotes the case of a woman who constantly complained that "Something must be the matter with me, for I cannot hear a thing that is told me—my hearing must be failing."

A man played a trick on her purely as a matter of scientific interest. In the midst of the conversation he interjected a "French nonsense verse." Then spoke the good woman: "I perfectly agree with you; in fact, I have always held precisely the same views." She had not heard a word.

Later he lowered his voice to a whisper and told her a spicy bit of scandal. She heard every word without the slightest trouble.

It was all a matter of the degree of attention given to the remarks in either case.

FLIES MOSQUITOES AND ALL OTHER INSECTS

All are dangerous, filthy and germ-laden, they menace your life and health. Kill every insect in your home, quickly, with genuine Fly-Tox.

FLY-TOX

MAKING Correct DEDUCTIONS

... in CONTRACT

The Right Time to Plunge

THE difference between the average bridge player and the expert is like the difference between the lamb of Wall Street and the Big Business man, spelled with two capital B's.

One reads the market reports, sees an immediate profit, and grabs for it. The other goes into the deeper questions of assets and liabilities, and plunges with caution, even though by so doing he seems to be passing up a sure thing.

On this week's hand, which was played in the pair event of the American Whist League National championships, held in Chicago, Mr. Geoffrey Mott-Smith, of New York City, was able to make a deduction which might very well have been the cause of his own undoing.

From the bidding he was able to decide that the declarer had a singleton in a certain suit, which deduction a beginner, or even an average player, might not have made. However, Mr. Mott-Smith went even further and did not utilise his information by following it up with his normal play of quickly taking his ace in that suit. He was able to further reason that by sacrificing the ace he would eventually gain far more.

South, dealer.

North and South vulnerable.

S: K
H: KQ9852
D: Q 6 3
C: K Q 3
S: 10 6 5 2
H: A J 10 4
D: J 8 6 4
C: 8
N
W
E
S
S: A Q J 8 7
H: 7
D: A 7 2
C: A J 9

The bidding:
South West North East
1 S. Pass 2 H. Pass
3 S. Pass 4 H. Pass
4 N.T. Pass 5 S. Pass
6 S. Pass

The bidding on the part of the South player was most optimistic, but whether or not the contract was a sound one Mr. Mott-Smith, sitting in the West position, was faced with the problem of defeating it.

Not having any way of telling just which of the minor suits to open, Mr. Mott-Smith chose his singleton club. A low card was played from Dummy, and the declarer made what actually turned out to be a bad error by winning the trick with the Jack rather than the ace. Had South won this trick with the ace he would have saved two club entries to the Dummy, and, as will be seen later, the extra entry would have enabled him to fulfil his contract.

At any rate, after winning the club jack, South quite correctly led his singleton heart. Mr. Mott-Smith felt absolutely certain from the bidding that this card was a singleton, as South had never supported the suit after North had bid and rebid it. He further realised that South would probably not immediately play the heart suit, holding two cards in it, before drawing trumps.

However, Mr. Mott-Smith went a little further in his reasoning. He saw that if he went up with the heart ace, the whole suit could easily be set up by the declarer, and since the latter was marked with the minor suit aces, there would be nothing more to the hand. He, therefore, played a low card, knowing that this would lose a heart trick for his side, but hoping that by so

doing he would subsequently gain two other tricks.

This is what actually occurred. South won the trick in Dummy, ruffed a heart in his own hand, re-entered the Dummy with the King of Spades, and ruffed still another heart. He now drew trumps, but at this point he realised the seriousness of his misplay at Trick 1. The Dummy contained but one more card of re-entry in the club suit and two more were obviously needed to set up the hearts and run the suit. South was thus unable to subsequently avoid the loss of two diamond tricks and his contract was defeated.

South was himself chiefly to blame for losing the hand. On the other hand, despite his bad error, the contract still would have been made had West obeyed the natural impulse not to lose an ace.

NEXT WEEK'S HAND
South, dealer.
North-South vulnerable.

S: A 10 8
H: K J 10 8 6
D: A 9
C: K Q 5
S: J 9 7 6 3
H: Q 9 4
D: 5
C: J 8 6 4
N
W
E
S
S: K Q 5 4 2
H: A 7 3
D: K Q J 2
C: A

This hand will be discussed in next week's article.

(Copyright)

HOTEL HOLBROOK says: For the unexperienced guest a few tasty sandwiches can be quickly made with Holbrook's Ambrosy Paste.

SKIN DISEASES

Phenomenal Success of Young Chemist's Secret Formula.

Acclaimed as miracles by many sufferers, who had despaired of relief from all kind of skin diseases, results achieved by Mr. J. J. McHugh, a well-known Sydney Consulting Chemist, are unique.



Cases of ten to twenty years' standing on which hundreds of pounds had been spent without success have responded readily to his treatment.

Hundreds of grateful letters testifying to the wonderful efficacy of his secret formula may be inspected at his rooms, Skin Diseases which Mr. McHugh has treated both personally and by post with equal success are as follows: Acne, Pimples, Germ Under Nail, Tetter, Verrucae, Warts, Alopecia, Tropical Ringworm, Ringworm, Barber's Rash, Pruritis, Scald-ruff, Rosacea, Urticaria, Chills, Infantile Eczema, etc. Typical of letters received by him is the following: For some time I have intended writing to let you know how I got on with your treatment. The Psoriasis has completely disappeared, and I have felt much better myself since taking your treatment. I think it is only fair that you should know the result. I think it is wonderful as I had suffered tortures from this complaint for eight years, and now after a little time you cannot see where it has been. I will always commend you to anybody suffering from a skin disease.

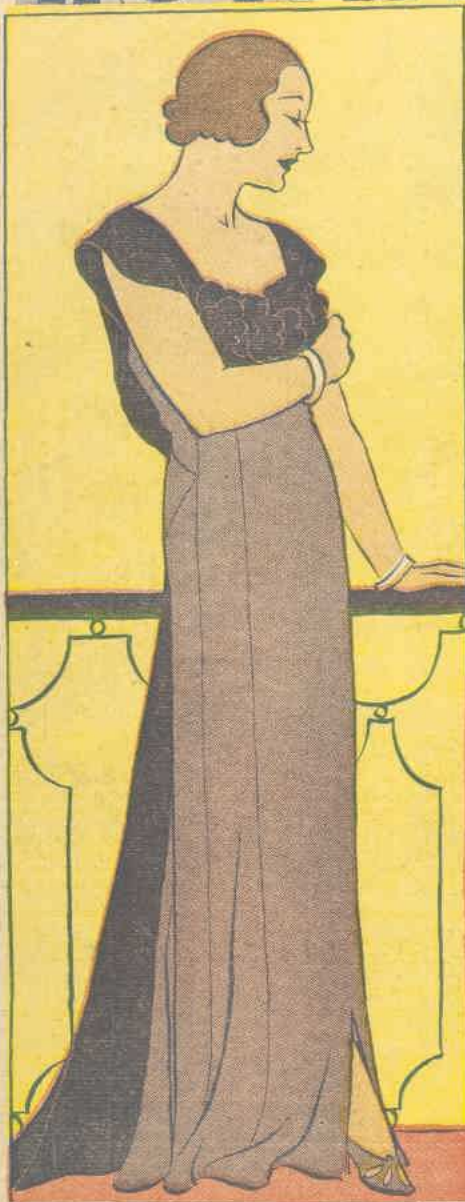
Gratefully yours, Mrs. C. W. P. SOUTH COAST.

The above letter, and hundreds of others, may be inspected at Mr. McHugh's rooms. Readers suffering from any skin troubles are invited to write (enclosing stamped addressed envelope) or call on Mr. McHugh at 114 Liverpool Street, 1st Floor (opp. Snow's), SYDNEY. Phone, MA3033. Consultation Free from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, 9 a.m. to 12 noon Saturdays, and 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Tuesdays and Fridays. Advice is given inquirers without collection.

The Fashion Parade

by Jessie Lait,
sketched by Petrov

STYLES for the NOT-SO-SLIM!



P E T R O V.

If you haven't a figure like a drink of water, keep these rules

ALL the attractive clothes of to-day seem to have been designed for the slim figure. Although we are continually reading that curves have staged a comeback, the world's leading fashion magazines continue to concentrate all their limelight on the woman with a "figure like a drink of water."

This is definitely discouraging for the not-so-slim. Still, it is possible for the woman with a fuller figure to select designs that flatter her curves and help immensely to produce that streamlined look.

NEARLY every woman in this country desires to look slim. Fortunately for us the day is really past when it was fashionable to be shaped like a board. The new frocks demand a feminine contour, but wide hips still have to be hidden as cunningly as possible.

If you are rather unfashionably wide at the hips, here are several rules that you should not break.

Don't wear red or white, broad belts, evening frocks with skirts cut completely on the cross, stripes, large patterns, tailored suits with short coats, light skirts and dark tops.

Concentrate on the darker colors, small patterns, three-quarter coats and hip-length loose jackets, capes, dark skirts and light tops, sashes that hang to the hem of your evening dress, skirts cut all or partly on the straight, plain tailored clothes, dull-surfaced materials.

The two-color suit and dress should be a boon to plump people. A dark

skirt and light or white bodice or jacket will immediately call attention to the upper half of the body. If your hips are slim and your bosom large, just reverse the order.

Satin evening dresses cut on the cross are very bad. They cling to the figure and show every line and curve. A skirt that hangs more or less straight from the hips to the floor and in a dull crepe is much kinder. If you are plump all over, wear dresses that have an unbroken line at the waist. Do not wear a belt. The evening dress, sketched at the left of this page, is ideal. There is no waistline, and the long ends of contrasting color hang to the floor, thus breaking the width at the hips.

If you are not wide above the waist, but are below it, colored sashes are good tied at the centre or side back. For evening they hang to the hem, and for day just in loops or a bow.

WHITE is the most fattening color, and then I think comes red—the latter only because it immediately

• AN evening dress for the not-so-slim woman in orchid crepe and raspberry satin. The unbroken waistline and long sash-ends give length and help the broad figure.

• IF you have wide hips, dark skirts and light tops will slenderise you. An attractive outfit, sketched above, comprises a navy linen skirt, navy and white spot crepe blouse, and white linen jacket.

• IF you are inclined to plumpness, yet yearn to wear a white dress, put over it a hip-length jacket in some color and have matching buttons and belt on the dress.

• A PINK shantung sports dress has navy and white spotted crepe collar and cuffs. The opening at the centre back helps the wider figure and so do the deep armholes.

• AN ideal ensemble for the large figure is that sketched at the right of the page. In navy and white printed crepe-de-chine. The dress has a cross-over bodice, the coat is finger-tip length and loose. The red sash adds a smart touch.

draws attention to one. Very pale pink and pale blue are not as bad as white. White day-dresses can be worn if they have hip-length or three-quarter-jackets with them, either in white or in a color.

Tailored suits are all right if you leave the coat open and do not have it too short.

Printed crepe-de-chines are extremely helpful. The pattern should not be too large and a dark background if you are very fat. A simple dress with a three-quarter or hip-length jacket of the same print will disguise the broadest of hips. Leave the coat open as in the sketch above. This style is also good for the large chest, as the coat breaks the line in front.

If you are large above the waist, do not wear frocks that have very high necks; a low square or V and a cross-over bodice is particularly good. Soft, draped collars, touches of white, a bunch of artificial flowers at the base of the neckline for evening, these will all break the broad line.

Capes Are Helpful

CAPIES will help you if you are broad in the hips. By giving width to the upper part of the body, the hips seem smaller by comparison. Capes can be worn day or night and in any length whatever and, fortunately, they are extremely fashionable this season.

Stripes are very fattening, especially those that run horizontally. Keep away from them altogether, especially in bathing costumes. It is far better when choosing a bathing suit to choose a dark color. Dark suits look just as attractive; navy blue, dark green, brown or wine. Those with white tops and dark skirts are good.

Don't wear shorts or slacks if you have broad hips. There are many beach skirts and dresses that are just as practical and attractive.

OUR PARIS SNAPSHOTS

THE newest evening bags match your shoes or some part of your dress; a sequin bag and sequin scarf go with a plain black dress.

IF you don't like high hats there are soft draped turbans that come down over one eye and becoming little toques. Feathers are, on nearly every model.

POINTED crowns are seen on autumn hats. For sports, a felt with a pointed Tyrolean crown; for the afternoon, little pointed turbans decorated with feathers.

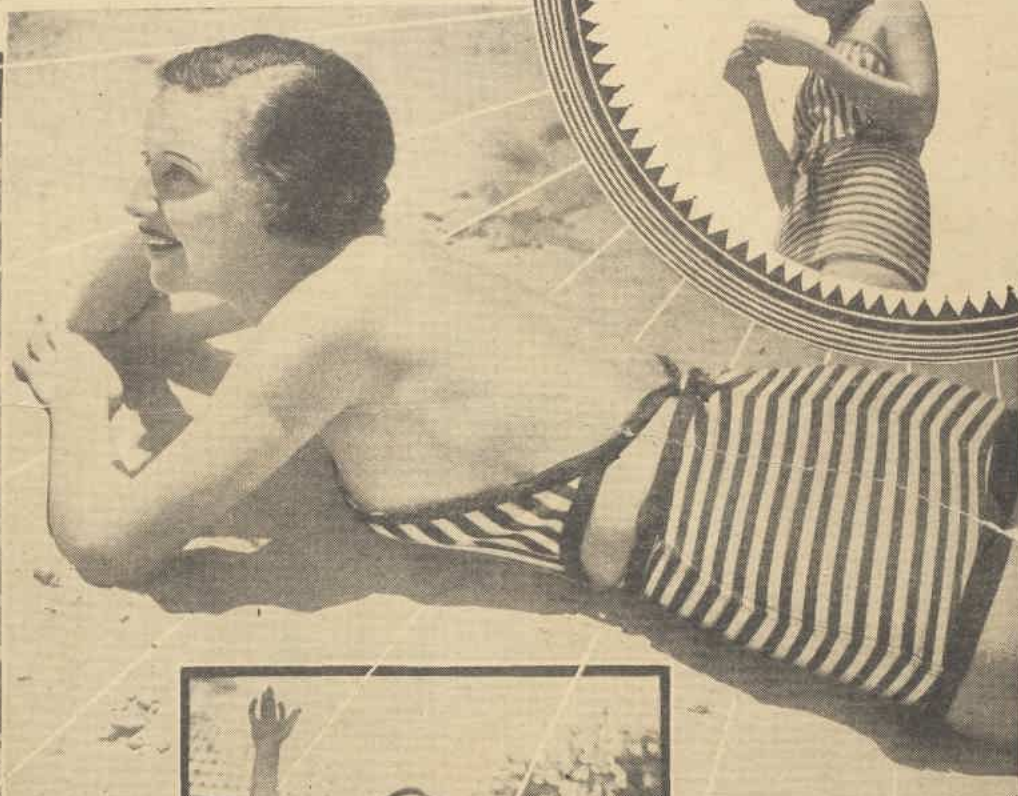
VELVETEEN is a popular trimming for crepe or sheer wool frocks. It makes belts, scarves, collars, and cuffs.

NEW nightgowns have square necks and very high waists, sashed with brown satin ribbon when the gown is peach or turquoise blue.

CRYSTAL-TOPPED hatpins about four inches long will hold your autumn hat in place.

BLOUSES, tailored or frilly, are still very fashionable; they are made of everything, from lame and sequins to net and lace.

UNDER THE NEW YEAR'S SUN . . .



● TWO charming Australian girls, Miss Elaine Hamill and Miss Betty Broad, display the latest beach wear fashions. Miss Hamill is wearing a cape and wrap-over skirt of white towelling with her pareo of gaily-printed cotton. Miss Broad prefers a swimming suit of horizontal and vertical stripes in navy and white and a sun-suit and hat of trellis design adorned with roses.

● IN the accompanying article, Miss Muriel Segal, our special representative abroad, gives some interesting highlights on the beach-wear fashions being launched abroad for the 1935 season.

—Women's Weekly photos.

—Beach wear by courtesy of Farmer and Company.

Beach Wear for 1935

From MURIEL SEGAL—By Air Mail.

IN spite of shivering weather over here, the manufacturers are busy creating beach wear for next season, and those going in search of sunshine are benefiting by the 1935 styles. So Australian beach maidens may be far in advance of Paris, owing to the alternating climates. They may wear the newest swim suits which are made to look as much as possible like the "foundation garments," which we've all been wearing the past few years to keep our figures put.

Old-fashioned people would say our new bathers look like corsets. They are made in one piece and ribbed all over in many patterns so as to mould the figure like an elastic corselet. Each top is an elaborate brassiere.

As I have said, it is a one-piece affair, however, for which let us give thanks, as the naked strip of flesh between shorts and brassiere was really hideous and broke the whole rhythm of line.

Some of the new swim suits are backless, but the shoulder straps are very wide—as wide as sashes. They cover up much more of us than last season. In fact, each mannequin must have worn at least a whole ounce of wool! Pinks, blacks, and browns, as well as large plaid and checked designs appear to be popular 1935 colors.

The new hats for the beach, called "Skuntung Baku," are just out, and are good and shady at back as well as front. Linen hats are also sponsored again by the leading French modistes.



Shampoo Sunshine
into your hair

with

EVAN WILLIAMS
SHAMPOOS

There's a Grade for
Every Shade

CAMOMILE
for fair hair

ORDINARY
for dark hair

Australian Agents, R. G. TURNLEY AND SON, Melbourne.

An Editorial

DECEMBER 29, 1934.

HAPPINESS—WHAT IS HAPPINESS?



WHEN people say a "Happy New Year" they nearly always mean it. Few people grudge happiness to others.

And this is strange. Most of us are very grudging when it comes to other possessions and attributes of our friends and relatives and neighbors. We grudge them wealth and social position and business success and higher status and nicer homes and cars and gardens. Yet we don't grudge them happiness.

The answer to this contradiction is that we are all forced into unnatural poses by the pressures of modern civilised life. The simplest and most elementary desire of human beings is happiness. But the complications of our social system have made such a thing as simple, unalloyed happiness merely a dream, a figure of speech.

Starting right at the beginning of things, we find that the lowest organism gets satisfaction out of the mere fact of being alive. It may be just a microscopic fragment of living matter, hardly to be distinguished from a speck of dust, but how it fights for existence!

That sensation of being glad to be merely alive is, therefore, deeply-rooted in us humans. That is why millions of suffering men and women continue to exist in abject squalor in the slums of European cities, and in the hovels of India and China. Their life is mostly work and hunger; but the mere sensation of being alive must bring some sort of satisfaction, even some sort of happiness.

There is an extreme opposite to these squalid swarms. There are people who have comfort, intellect, education, riches, all the bounties of our civilisation, and yet are miserably bored and unhappy. The sensation of feeling that it is good just to be alive means nothing to them; they are only putting in time. Sometimes hectic, sometimes indifferent, but all the time aware of a sense of futility. What's it all matter?—they ask.

Being clever, these unhappy people write a lot; and some of them become politicians and clergy, and talk a lot. That is why the world is so full of doctrines of despair and futility.

Perhaps it is true that there is no ultimate purpose in the universal scheme of things. But for mankind in the mass the pursuit of happiness is an almost complete philosophy of life.

—THE EDITOR.

POINTS OF VIEW

Men As Beach Censors

HAS anyone noticed that the people who tell us what we should wear on the beach are invariably men? We have women in Parliament, women in local councils, women in professions, women in charge of big business, but on the question of dress, in which women are vitally interested, they are not even asked for an opinion.

It is the same in all States. If it isn't a Cabinet Minister it is the local councillor, and if the local councillor can't or won't make up their minds it is the police inspector who takes a hand—and after him comes the Police Magistrate, as a sort of final referee.

We have never heard that any of these persons, or classes of persons, were specially qualified. You would say offhand that women themselves, particularly older women and mothers of families, were better judges than anyone of what is or isn't a proper thing to wear on the beach. What have our feminists got to say?

Visitor Has Vision

MOST people will say, "Hear, hear" to the views on war and international relations expressed by that interesting visitor to the Eucharistic Conference, Archbishop Downey, of Liverpool. Dr. Downey's speech at the Sydney Town Hall last week was broadcast throughout Australia, and it gave everyone something to think about.

As a preventive of wars, Dr. Downey points out that pacts and agreements, "gentlemen's" or otherwise, are mere "scraps of paper" when men's passions are aroused. He would educate the rising generation "on broader and better lines" so that they would understand the other person's point of view, and be in a state of mind that made war impossible.

There is a lot of sense in this! Ignorance begets prejudice, and prejudice is the sort of thing that engenders animosity on a great scale. You never hear of a war between Doctors of Philosophy, at least not with lethal weapons like swords and guns.

Pottery For Christmas

IF you asked the average housewife what kind of Christmas present pleased her most, she might have something to say about vases, bowls, and cups and saucers. The social writers of the dailies never seem to have thought of these.

An extra cup and saucer is always a handy thing to have in a house. And no one ever has enough vases in which to put flowers and plants. You can buy an Australian-made jar, beautifully glazed and colored, for any price from about 1/10 upwards.

"One of the best things the Federal Government ever did," said the head of a retail house lately, "was to insist on the country of origin being stamped on all the pottery brought into Australia. This provision has helped the local manufacturers because a lot of people are patriotic enough to choose Australian." It has been effective against the foreign manufacturers who up to two years ago could sell cups and plates and dishes here as English or Australian.

Lyrics of Life

In the South

Not here the holly and the mistletoe
And the peal of sleigh bells ringing,
But the waratah and the wattle grow
In the time of carol singing.
Not here do the Yule fires blaze and burn
With the chestnuts roundly roasting,
But the tides of summer shall flow and turn
In the time of our Christmas toasting.

—P. Duncan-Brown.

Napoleon's Letters

AUSTRALIAN dailies with one accord have reported the sale at Sotheby's, London, of Napoleon's "love letters" to Marie Louise, the price paid being £15,000. If the purchaser thought he was really buying love letters he fell in; there were no letters of that description written by the dictator of Europe to the Austrian Princess whom, without having seen, he had chosen as a prop for his throne.

Very interesting letters, all the same, and as historical documents well worth the money. The ex-Lieutenant of Artillery, now an Emperor, wanted to please the daughter of the Hapsburgs, and took all sorts of pains to do so.

As the letters were bought on behalf of the French Government the purchasers no doubt knew what they were getting, and did not look for expressions of real affection in these courtly despatches. Napoleon could, and did, write love letters—but only to one woman. That was to Josephine when he left her for the Army of Italy the day he married her. They were real and burning love letters which the lady did not appreciate till too late.



THE LITTLE CHURCH on the hill—a picturesque camera study from an overseas village

Wonderful Chinese

IT is interesting to learn, on the authority of a Chinese merchant, Mr. R. Y. Chen, that English is rapidly becoming the commercial language of the East. Mr. Chen gave this information when he arrived in Sydney from Shanghai last week. "Chinese merchants," he said, "use English almost exclusively for communications and contracts with foreign firms, and in some cases even among themselves."

These Orientals have linguistic gifts that put most of us westerners to shame. "In China," says Mr. Chen, "English is now being taught in all secondary schools." Imagine what would be said if an Australian director of Education started the teaching of Chinese in our secondary schools.

What would the parents think? And how many of our youngsters could in their school years master Chinese—that extraordinarily difficult language, which takes most Englishmen a lifetime to learn, and they don't always master it then?

FROM SUE TO LOU

A Bright Girl's Letters



Can We Censor Our Children's Reading?

By LINDA P. LITTLEJOHN

This is an extremely difficult subject, that is, if we refrain from superficially tossing the matter aside with an "Of course, certainly we can and should!" and delve into the subject more deeply and see, first, if it is really possible to censor children's reading; and, second, if it is necessary.

NOW, when is a child, a child—at what age can a child be permitted to judge for himself or herself? I had a very interesting letter a while ago from a correspondent who deplored the fact that she had found her son of 16 reading an American magazine, loaned him by a friend, which was definitely and thoroughly salacious, and she felt that there should be some means of censoring such printed matter so that it should not come into the hands of children.

I think, first, we must recognise that neither the State nor the Federal Government can differentiate between adults and children as regards censoring, for, if they are to ban all books which might be unsuitable for children, then much fine literature will be denied to adults. It is also quite impossible to prevent children buying any literature that is for sale to adults.

We could hardly throw the responsibility on the shopkeeper, and even if we could, once a book is in a house then anyone can read it—that is, if they know where to find it! So it must therefore be agreed that it is impossible to censor books for children only.

Cheap Junk

But there are certainly some magazines which could well be vetoed and that are imported—not as literature—but merely as "cheap junk," bought at "job prices," and then resold here at a low price within the reach of a child with a few pennies.

In this case, their lurid covers and their price are at one and the same time their lure and their danger, and this type of book is well known to many mothers and fathers. They are, to all appearances, gangster stories, but interwoven in the stories are realms of salaciousness definitely written with that purpose.

From these, neither children nor adults can get profit or pleasure, they are not worth the name of literature and should be banned simply as undesirable goods. They are merely money-making stunts, the price of which is the soul of a child and the price at that rate is too high.

But my honest opinion is that, with the above exception, we cannot censor young people's reading. After all, reading is an occupation just like games and picture shows. Now, if we train our child to listen-in to prize fights or take him to see such entertainment, then most probably his tastes will eventually lie in that direction; if we take him to race meetings and discuss with him the latest "form" of the horses, then he will most likely later seek his relaxation on the racecourse, his tastes will have been directed that way.

Where Parents Fail

In like manner, if from earliest days we provide our children with plenty of good books, then their tastes will run that way. But "there's the rub." Do parents give their children plenty of good books—stories of adventure, of travel, of heroism, and clean, healthy happenings, or do they just expect them to get their books from "somewhere"? I am afraid the latter is the usual parental custom, and so a great deal of the blame lies with the parents.

CHILDREN must, and will, read. If they can't get what they want they will read what they can get. There are certainly many books we should prefer our children not to read—not so much because of the subject treated therein, but because of the thoroughly distorted views they present, and because they make an occasional happening appear as a general rule.

Now, just one more growl against parents. If children pore over salacious books, it is either because their minds are warped or because they are ignorant and desire to allay their ignorance on the subject of the laws of life. A child is naturally and rightly curious. If parents would only from earliest years give their children all necessary information on this subject, a quest for such knowledge by means of books would never enter their heads.

PROHIBITIONS and negations are useless. Truth must prevail, so let us give children truth and they will not hunt for themselves and find, not truth, but a distorted and disgusting presentation of the wonders and beauties of life.

SO I cannot join forces with those who would regulate by law the thought of the community. As parents we have few responsibilities left us to-day—in regard to our families' upbringing—and we ought, at least, to be equal to this one.

P. C. WREN'S

Greatest Story Since
"Beau Geste"

"If wishes were horses, beggars would ride," says the old saw. Here is the story of six men and their wishes, and how they were influenced by a woman, with dramatic and far-reaching results.

Illustrated
.. by ..
WEP.



BEGGARS' Horses

SIX men, brother officers on a hunting expedition in India, encounter a mysterious Holy Man, to whom each confides the secret ambition of his heart.

Colonel Harrington-Spens' secret wish is for Unbounded Wealth.

Captain Hazelrigg, above all else, desires Courage.

Captain Wogan's greatest desire is for Happiness.

Major Wallingford craves Long Life.

Captain Burlestone asks for Health.

Lieutenant Easterwood's ambition is to possess Great Strength.

Some time later Colonel Harrington-Spens falls in love with Hazelrigg's sister, Mary. They are married and settle in India, where their domestic bliss is interrupted by the astounding news that Mary has inherited a fortune of ten million pounds.

Thereafter the whole life of Colonel Harrington-Spens is haunted by the fear that the vast fortune will come to him through the death of his wife.

Burlestone and Easterwood re-enter the tale. Easterwood's life is attempted by a mysterious midnight visitor; he is spurred on to achieve his ambition of becoming the strongest man in India; and he falls head over heels in love.

CAPTAIN STACEY BURLESTONE, a man of ideas, had an idea.

For things were getting worse. Definitely worse. Gradually, imperceptibly, the situation had developed until somehow or other, it had come to pass that it was an established, recognised and accepted fact in the bungalow—

that Aubrey Easterwood was madly in love with Mrs. Mackleworth.

There had been no sudden declaration, statement, confession.

It had not come to pass that Aubrey Easterwood had seized his friend's hand and, with shame-fushed face and hanging head, had, with halting words and faltering voice, admitted the painful truth.

It had not come to pass that, with squared back-thrust shoulders and up-thrown head, he had definitely trumpeted forth, bravely and proudly, the fact, naked and unashamed, that he loved Daphne Mackleworth.

NOR had it come to pass that, stricken down by malaria or other illness, he had, in his delirium, called upon her name; or in his weakness whispered to his friend that his heart was breaking for love of her.

Nothing of the sort. But in his ingenious guilelessness he had talked of her so frequently and at such length that—well, there it was, and something really must be done before something really happened. Something—nasty.

Hence the idea.

Mrs. Moresby Wallingford, of course! She'd help. And naturally, she'd hold no brief for Mrs. Mackleworth if she knew that Tony was philandering with her. Be only too glad to put a spoke in her wheel—being a human woman.

Joan Wallingford was one of the very best. A jolly good sort, and one of those married women who really are good for a young man. She'd advise him. And her advice would be worth having, too. She had liked Aubrey ever since he had stayed with her and old Tony, when they were on furlough.

And most women, particularly the best of them, loved rescuing men, especially desirable, presentable, eligible young men from the "clutches" of an older woman—apart from any personal reasons.

On the afternoon of the very day on which the idea occurred to him, Captain Stacey Burlestone sought out Mrs. Moresby Wallingford, where, briefly a grama-widow, her husband away, shooting, she sat alone in the Club, reading a magazine.

"Will you do something for me—and for Aubrey Easterwood—Mrs. Wallingford?" he asked.

"Of course I will. Only too delighted," replied Joan Wallingford, who had a particular liking for both

men. "Even if I weren't deep in your debt for your great kindness to me when we arrived here."

"Oh that! . . . Pleasantest month of my life, when you and Tony stayed with me."

"What can an ignorant newcomer here, like myself, do to help you?"

"Well, it's like this . . . You know Mrs. Mackleworth?"

"Yes. We've exchanged calls and I have talked to her at the Gymkhana."

"What do you think of her?"

"Well, in what way? From what point of view?"

"D'you like her?"

"I don't dislike her. She's enigmatising. . . . But I think she's terribly attractive. One of the smartest, cleverest and most amusing women I . . ."

"Yes, as you say, terribly attractive. That's the trouble."

Joan Wallingford opened her eyes. She had rather gathered, from what her husband had said, that Stacey Burlestone was something of a misgynist, or at any rate was a confirmed bachelor. Was he going to ask her to help him meet Mrs. Mackleworth? Well, why not? Better the bachelor, Captain Burlestone, than her Tony.

"You find her so?"

"I? Er . . . Oh, no! No! It's young Easterwood. Dark secret, of course, strictly between ourselves. He's fallen head over ears in love with her."

Joan Wallingford smiled.

"How dreadful," she said.

"Well, yes, it is—or might be—literally that. He's a splendid boy; absolutely one of the very best. Clean as a whistle and straight as a die; and it might be, well, pretty ghastly. Might end in a tragedy."

"Oh, surely not. I . . ."

"WELL, you see, one doesn't know what Mrs. Mackleworth might take. Still less what the man Mackleworth might do, in the event of—well, trouble. And whatever he did would be something . . . nasty."

"I don't like Captain Mackleworth," admitted Joan Wallingford. "Horrible man."

"Yes, quite so. I think there's no possible doubt that, if it came to trouble, he'd make all the trouble he could. That's quite certain. So what is vital is the question of what sort of person Mrs. Mackleworth really is; what sort of line she'd take if things developed."

"What can I do in a matter like this? What had you in mind?"

"Well, I thought perhaps you'd hold a watching brief, so to speak, and do anything you could."

"Such as . . . ?"

"Well, could you get to know Mrs.

Frankly and plainly, a man with whom she could fall in love . . . real love.

Mackleworth better? Make up your mind about her? Form an opinion as to the sort of terms on which she is with her husband?"

"Really, Captain Burlestone, I . . ."

"Don't say you won't help."

"Of course I'll help, if there's anything I can possibly do; but you are sketching out a rather—tall order."

"Yes, I know. It does sound like that; but if you cultivated her she might tell you things."

"She doesn't strike me as a very oncoming and communicative sort of person," mused Joan Wallingford. "Where women are concerned, anyhow."

"No?"

"And it isn't as though I were an old friend—or a new bosom-friend, is it? She's hardly likely to discuss her husband with me."

NO, but you might get an idea, an inkling. And being a clever woman . . .

Joan Wallingford gave a slight ironical bow.

" . . . you might be able to find out what her attitude really is, to Aubrey Easterwood. You might introduce his name and see how she reacted."

Mrs. Moresby Wallingford laughed. "What—a sudden gasp, a guilty flush, the vapors, smelling-salts, a swoon . . . ?"

"No, don't rag, Mrs. Wallingford. It really is serious; or rather it might be frightfully serious if Mackleworth is one of those violent, jealous brutes—or a mean, vindictive fellow—or one of those men who are on the look-out for a chance to get rid of their wives."

Mrs. Moresby Wallingford studied Stacey Burlestone's face and smiled again, this time to herself.

"How funny men were . . . the dears."

"What do you think of Mrs. Mackleworth?" she asked. "Do you agree that she is an outrageous flirt?"

"Good gracious, no! Who says such a thing?"

"The old cats of the station, I suppose," he added bitterly.

"You don't believe any of the stories that have drifted here, after her, from Poona?"

"Never heard any," replied Burlestone shortly. "Not about her. Only about him."

"You don't agree with those people who sympathise with him for having such a 'handful' of a wife?"

"Most certainly not. Handful? People say anything about a beautiful woman."

"Yes, she dances well, doesn't she?"

"Divinely."

"Tennis, too."

"Oh, championship form."

"Dresses extraordinarily well, doesn't she?"

"Oh, marvellously, marvellously. Always looks as though she'd come straight out of a band-box."

"And so well-read. Italian and German poetry and all that."

"Yes."

"In fact, you yourself have formed a very high opinion of her, Captain Burlestone?" asked Joan Wallingford artlessly, and with no trace of a smile upon her kindly, friendly countenance.

"I? Oh, no. Not at all. You see, I really know nothing about her. Young Easterwood knows her far better than I."

"So does Mr. Wellington, I imagine," observed Joan Wallingford, and pondered as to how well her Tony knew the woman.

"Wellington! Yes. Confounded pup. Must be a perfect nuisance to her. Simply shadows her about. I gather from Aubrey that he absolutely haunts the Mackleworth bungalow."

"Well, isn't that rather useful—from your point of view?" smiled Joan Wallingford. "Surely. Much better than if Mr. Easterwood were her sole and conspicuous—attendant."

Stacey Burlestone frowned.

"Er—m-m . . . Yes . . . No, I think it makes Aubrey all the worse. Jealousy and rivalry and all that, you know. Spurs him on, so to speak. Not that he needs any spurring on. But it makes him, if possible, all the keener to cut-in, quick, before Wellington does him down. Dances and teas and morning rides and all that."

"NO, I think it makes Aubrey all the worse," said Burlestone again, after a brief silence.

"Yes, I can understand that. We are apt to value things—and people—more, because others value them," mused Joan Wallingford.

"Yes. I shouldn't be surprised if half the trouble now isn't . . . well . . . the competitive spirit, if you know what I mean. Jealousy of Clarence Wellington."

Mrs. Moresby Wallingford pinched her lower lip as she sat in thought. Suddenly she looked up at Burlestone with her frank, charming, and delightful smile.

"I know!" she said. "You cut them both out. Surely she'd prefer the society of a man like you, with your experience of life, to that of callow youths like those boys."

Please turn to Page 32



an irresistible fragrance

There are some, and they are the most adorable of women, who are always so fresh and flower-like that it seems they must have stepped but a moment ago from a perfumed bath and a cloud of some delicious powder. And indeed it may be so! For nowadays many women are finding in Johnson's Baby Powder the secret of an irresistible fragrance. Being intended originally to keep a baby's skin sweet and lovable, Johnson's Baby Powder is the softest and most delicate toilet powder you can use. Powder your limbs with it after the bath and all the evening you will carry with you and about you an alluring daintiness.

FOR MEN, TOO!

Johnson's Baby Powder makes its appeal to men who desire the maximum of comfort after shaving and showering. It dries, cools and protects the skin. No chafing—just a feeling of freshness and cleanliness.

**Johnson's BABY
powder**
BEST FOR BABY—BEST FOR YOU

● A product of Johnson & Johnson—World's largest manufacturers of Surgical Dressings, Johnson's Baby Soap and Cream, Talc, The Modern Toothbrush, Meds, Etc.

83-34

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MUSIC of the WEEK

By GEORGE MATTHEWS

Survey of Music for 1934

Wordsworth's lines, "Where music dwells lingering and wandering on as loth to die," might well be applied to the year now closing. In the history of Australian music, 1934 has been especially notable for the visit of Sir Hamilton Harty and the presentation of grand opera in English.

IT has been a year of memorable music. Orchestras, choirs, local conductors, soloists, and teachers have all done their bit; but the greatest public attention has been centred on, first, Harty, and then grand opera, with which the name of Florence Austral must be coupled.

During his brief visit in May and June Sir Hamilton Harty taught us lessons which should be lasting. He declared that in all essentials the Australian orchestral musician is second to none; and, with continuous practice under inspired leadership, our musicians could be welded into a permanent orchestra capable of rendering worthily the world's greatest music.

A national symphony orchestra in Australia has been a dream long cherished, and the difficulties of maintaining such an orchestra appear to have been simplified by the entry of the Broadcasting Commission into the organisation of public entertainment.

Added to the resources both musical and financial of existing organisations, the Commission's revenue could back a really ambitious effort. If the visit of Sir Hamilton Harty is to have any lasting benefit, the Broadcasting Commission must not be content to rest on the laurels won by that visit.

One notes that the second annual report, just published, states that, unfortunately, the financial position of the Commission has not yet enabled it to organise a complete symphony orchestra, but it has been able substantially to support the leading orchestras in the various States and to broadcast many of their performances.

Concert Orchestras

CONCERT orchestras, a military band, and a dance orchestra have been permanently engaged. Except for the military band, a welcome legacy of Captain H. E. Adkins, such combinations have been a regular feature of A class broadcasting since long before the Commission assumed control.

The Commission takes pride in an-

nouncing that, in pursuance of its policy of developing Australian talent, 26,472 Australian performers appeared during the year ended June 30. This is a staggering and praiseworthy figure, and it would detract from its impressiveness to suggest that it includes choirs, orchestras, and soloists counted more than once.

Few listeners will quarrel with the declaration that the practice of inviting leading artists from abroad to visit Australia is to be continued. Apart from Sir Hamilton Harty, outstanding people who have toured under Broadcasting Commission auspices during the year now ending have included Ladia Finnberg, the Nelson Trio, the Spivakovskys, and Percy Grainger.

In October Percy Grainger began a series of broadcast lecture-recitals, which have been attracting wide attention. His aim has been to review "the most interesting and original phases of music," a field which has introduced a mental, primitive, and folk music; European art music from the 13th century; folk harmonisation as practised by Russians and negroes; hybrid music orientated; and unnatural harmonisation.

To assist him he has six to nine strings, voices, and pianists who played keyboard and percussion instruments. We heard three performers playing on one piano, and pianists playing the strings of the piano with small xylophone mallets. Percy Grainger's contributions to the year have been novel, instructive, and enjoyable.

Grand opera in English and the revival after a long period of several Wagnerian works were not the success in Melbourne which Sir Benjamin Fuljier hoped for, though this was neither his fault nor the fault of a superlative company, headed by Florence Austral. This fine company has now transferred to Sydney, and if public support warrants, will visit other States and New Zealand during the coming year.

Florence Austral's decision to remain in Australia after her concert season was a popular one, and she has proved a tower of strength to Sir Benjamin Ful-



FLORENCE AUSTRAL, Australia's leading dramatic soprano, who appeared as the name part in "Aida" on the opening night of the Royal Grand Opera Co. in Sydney.

ler's company. Opera-lovers appreciate the opportunity of hearing this great Australian soprano in some of the roles which brought her fame overseas.

Some Regrets

THOUGH rich, the year has not been free of regrets. It was regrettable, for instance that the projected visits of John Brownlee, Peter Dawson, and other world-famous Australians for the Melbourne Centenary celebrations did not materialise. In some quarters also it is regretted that another year has passed without any definite move towards erecting a memorial to Dame Nellie Melba.

Absence of big competitions probably accounts for the comparative silence of our composers this year, although one remembers an interesting orchestral concert of Australian works, including Alfred Hill's "Himelton," and "An Australian Symphony" by Lindley Evans.

The Broadcasting Commission's second competition for Australian composers closes next March, and some notable new works will probably be heard when the results are announced.

Spivakovsky-Kurtz Trio to Broadcast

LOVERS of chamber music will be delighted at the prospect of the series of concerts to be broadcast on National stations by the Spivakovsky-Kurtz trio. These world-famous artists, who have temporarily made Australia the land of their adoption, are taking advantage of the summer vacation of the Melbourne University Conservatorium to tour for seventeen weeks.

Jascha Spivakovsky met with great success in Sydney during his first tour as a solo pianist, and was no less welcome when he returned with his brother Tosey, and Edmund Kurtz, the trio who had already established a European reputation.

Each member of the trio is a soloist of distinction, and by their incessant diligence in ensemble work have achieved a degree of artistry seldom heard in Australia before.

Their programmes on the coming tour, which will commence in Sydney on January 2, and be broadcast from 2BL, will cover a variety of classics ranging from Bach to Kodaly, and the combinations of the instrumentalists will be interchanged as much as possible. One of the rarely heard ensembles will be the duets for violin and cello unsupported by the piano.

It is four years since the Spivakovsky-Kurtz trio gave their first concert at The Hague, Holland. Then followed a tour of Australia, where they gave 52 recitals. Kurtz then returned to Prague, and on his arrival at Adelaide six months ago the old combination was once more established, much to the delight of Australian music lovers.

HOST HOLBROOK says: I have sliced Olives ready for sandwiches. Have you ever tried an olive sandwich?***

Hans Fallada's New Novel

HANS FALLADA is now ranked with the foremost of German novelists, and his latest book, "Who Once Eats Out of the Tin Bowl," so ably translated by Eric Sutton, has already commanded tremendous sales in England, although it was only published there a few weeks ago.

His previous story, "Little Man, What Now?" has been filmed, and is showing in Australia at present.

Hans Fallada writes fearlessly, with no evidence of the restraining political influences that have handicapped many German authors in recent times. His work, too, is characterised by its lack of sensationalism, and he writes with tremendous understanding and great realism.

"Who once eats out of the tin bowl returns to it again and again" is a quotation much favored by prison authorities of Germany, and around this Hans Fallada has written a powerful story dealing with prison life in Germany, and in particular with the efforts of one ex-prisoner, Willi Kufalt, towards rehabilitation.

He presents the sordid side of prison life, but does not disregard its humor. He reveals all too vividly the hypocrisy and insincerity of organisations professing to exist for the benefit of ex-convicts, and the tremendous odds that any criminal has to fight against in his efforts to return to the life of a respectable self-supporting citizen.

The novel is singularly without bias, which adds to its effectiveness. One feels that Willi Kufalt's return to prison is as inevitable as doom, but the sense of tragedy is lessened as far as one's



HANS FALLADA, celebrated German author, whose latest novel is reviewed in this article.

sympathy for Kufalt is concerned by his own feelings when he finds himself settling down for his night's rest in his ward.

"How good it was to be back home again. No more worry. Almost like home in the old days, with his father and mother. Almost? It was better. Here a man could live in peace. The voices of the world were stilled. No making up one's mind, no need for effort. Life proceeded duly and in order. He was utterly at home."

Willi Kufalt fell quietly asleep with a peaceful smile on his lips. (Putnam's.)

Here's instant relief from racking pains. "Presto" will banish the headaches and backaches women find unbearable, and amazingly relieve the aches of sciatica and lumbago. You can take "Presto" Powders with absolute safety, they will not affect the heart or cause indigestion. "Presto," which is scientifically prepared to a new, improved, A.P.C. Formula, "acts like magic."

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AT ALL CHEMISTS AND STORES

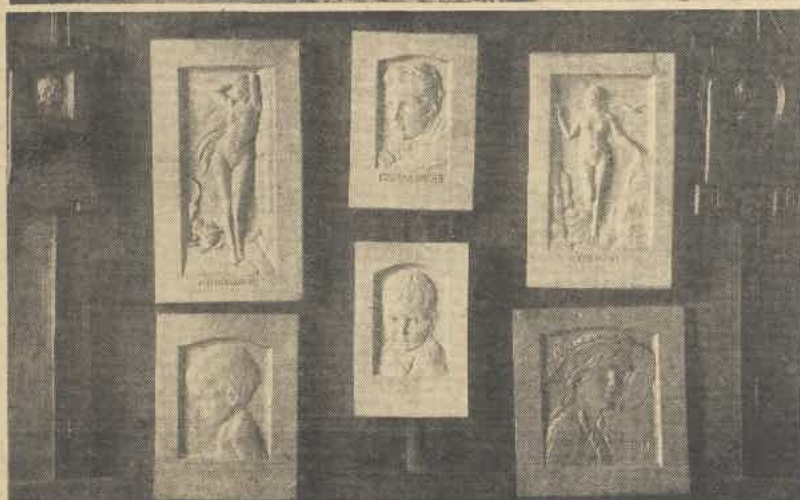
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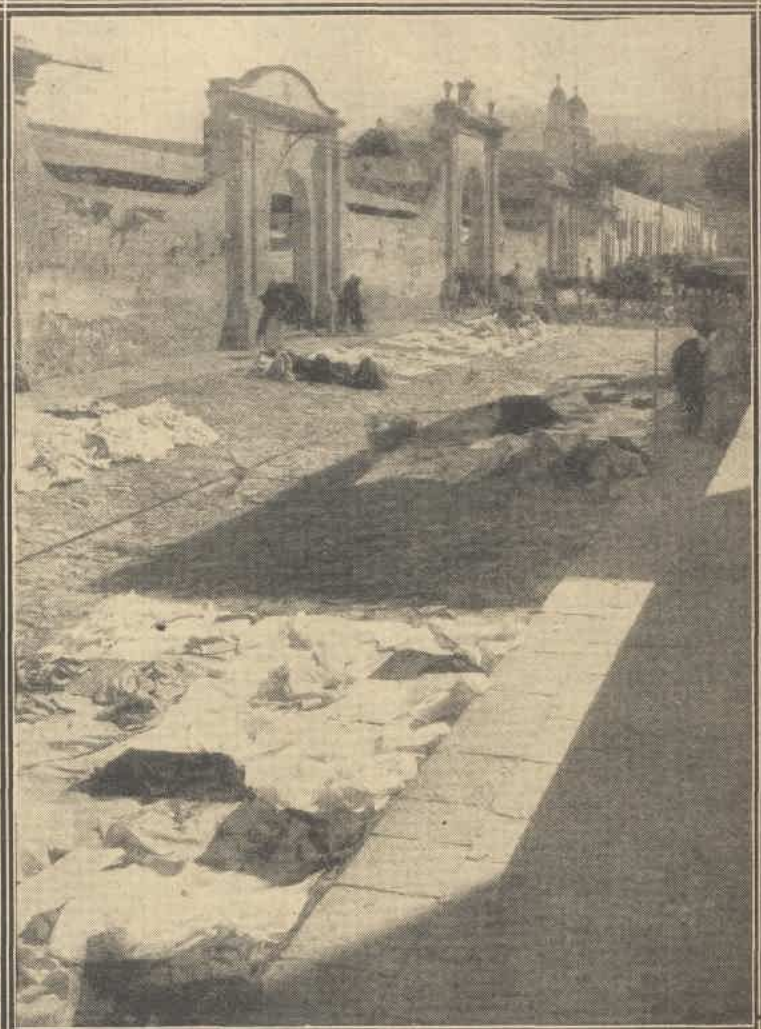


P.S. 50.

Girl Wood Carver : Boy Genius : Flyer's Fiancee



MISS BETTY HUNTING, of Queensland, is making quite a name for herself at wood-carving. She is seen above, working an Egyptian head, while in the lower picture are some samples of her work seen on display.



THIS IS THE WAY the merchants display their goods in the streets of ancient Mexico. The photo is the work of Frederick Simpson, an exhibitor in American photographic salons, who recently visited Australia. He is the Hoppe of the United States. In Mexico the merchants just lay their goods out in the streets. Needless to say, no jay-walking is permitted.



AN UNCONVENTIONAL SNAP of the wonderful boy violinist, Yehudi Menuhin, who will be visiting Australia soon. He enjoys riding his bicycle in all weathers, and, like most geniuses, behaves like an ordinary person.



IT HAS NOW been announced that Campbell Black, Scott's co-pilot in the Air Race, is engaged to Florence Desmond (above), the celebrated English comedienne, who is at present starring in London's latest theatrical extravaganza, "Stream-line."



HERE IS A CUSTOM which has not made its appearance in Australia. The pretty girls shown in the picture are taxi-dancers. Any male thing can hire them for a dance by just handing them a ticket, strips of which are purchased at a booking-office. The girls cannot refuse.



EVERY WOMAN'S DREAM is realised here in this wonderful Chin-chilla cloak, which is worth £4000, and was one of the models displayed at a recent mannequin show of furs at Grosvenor House. The latter was the luxury hotel and flats establishment in London that sponsored Scott's plane in the Air Race.

A SURE FRIEND IN UNCERTAIN TIMES



Benefits others have SECURED

EVERY A.M.P. counsellor can show you the benefits others have secured through their A.M.P. membership. When next one calls on you, ask him to show them to you. They are the best kind of proof that you, too, will benefit by membership. The A.M.P. exists for the purpose of lightening the burden of its members' responsibilities. See that you give it the opportunity to lighten yours.

On one day last month, at one branch only, the A.M.P. paid out the following sums to the widows or other beneficiaries of members:

Policy No.	Age at Entry.	Sum Assured.	Yearly Premium.	Total Amount paid with Bonuses Added.
98786 ..	35	£500	£14 1 8	£1,283 16 0
156352 ..	30	500	8 7 1	1,144 4 0
414783 ..	40	500	16 7 6	995 4 0
189572 ..	30	500	4 15 8	487 8 0
406111 "C"	43 and 35	2,000	95 15 0	4,096 18 0
401593 ..	38	8,000	242 13 4	10,906 16 0

All these policies, as it happened, were on the lives of members who had lived to ripe years, but on the same day the Society paid out £1,000 to a young widow whose husband had become a member only a few weeks earlier. Life is uncertain. Membership in the A.M.P. removes the anxiety of that uncertainty.

Ask that an A.M.P. counsellor be sent to talk your needs over with you, or ask that a copy of "Investing in Happiness" be posted.

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C. A. ELLIOTT, F.I.A. Actuary.
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Make Refreshing Summer FRUIT DRINKS whenever you need them with

P.M.U. EXTRACTS

These extracts contain highly-concentrated fruit juices and ensure refreshing fruit beverages that will appeal to thirsty palates. One 6oz. bottle makes half-gallon fruit cordial—enough for 50 large glasses.

Made in the following flavours—
Orange, Lemon, Raspberry, Strawberry, Pineapple.

Stocked by all good grocers.



NEW BOOKS

CONDUCTED BY JEAN WILLIAMSON

"Season Ticket"... a Novel that Haunts the Memory

Travelling beside us in our daily excursions to the city are men and women apparently composed and at peace with the world.

But how many of them are really so at heart? How many succeed in hiding a loneliness of spirit, a tumult of despair, a sense of utter futility?

ALL this is brought home to us in "Season Ticket," an excellent novel by Margaret Isles.

Margaret Isles does not suggest that any steps should be taken to gain a closer knowledge of the affairs of one's neighbors, or the desirability of doing so.

But her novel brings home the fact of how very little human beings do know of the intimate spiritual emotions of each other, and how successfully they can create a bulwark against intrusion into the recesses of their minds and hearts.

Ernest Raymond has written a foreword in which he says, "I think this book ought to strike home to all the millions who daily take the train to their work in the city or to those larger millions who ponder sometimes on the inescapable loneliness of every soul in the world."

This gives the key to the story, for it concerns a number of people who journey together, year in and year out, to their businesses in London.

An apparently happy crowd, exchanging polite conversation, displaying a surface interest and knowledge of each other's affairs, but totally unaware of the private lives and personalities of each other.

MEN ... Need ARMOUR

A newcomer to the ranks of Australian novelists is Mr. W. L. Power, a young Sydney barrister, whose first book, "Men Need Armour," has just been published by the Macquarie Head Press.

It is a romantic story, imaginative to a high degree, and unusual in many of its aspects.

THE author is very 1934 in his outlook, to judge by the utterances of his characters, and reveals modern thought on social and economic questions, limitation of the family and so forth.

Yet, in spite of (or, perhaps, because of) this he finds the so-called old-fashioned ones of marriage and paternity the most satisfying armour for his hero.

Tristram Clerring, a young man of independent means, satiated with the type of life he has been living, and suffering from the effects of an unsatisfactory love affair, seeks some purpose for the restlessness of his own spirit.

He seeks it on a rough tramp steamer travelling from Sydney to London, in platonic friendship, and ultimately pursues it on a cruise on the Aegean Sea, among the strongholds of an ancient civilisation which he had studied and deeply admired.

His caïque is wrecked, and he finds himself cast up on an island, the entire population of which are lunatics, except for the doctors and staff at the settlement.

This part of the story reveals very fine imaginative writing not devoid of irony, particularly in the case of the man, Adam.

IN Rosalind, niece of Dr. Dawes, one of the superintendents at the settlement, Tristram finds the answer to all the troubling searchings that had beset his mind and heart, and women will find his reflections on this conclusion to all his searching rather interesting.

"Women don't need armour as men do. Are they courageous or do they merely lack imagination?"

And again, "Philosophy and sentimentality, good and bad, are as alien to a woman as art is. A woman who embraces any of those things is to that extent, no true woman. Why aren't women afraid of life? Perhaps, because they unconsciously feel that they are a part of life in the way men are not. It is true that they fend off reality in small things. They paint their faces, distort their figures, wear clothes that enhance their charms, eat from delicate china and decorate their homes, as far as possible, but the really unpleasant things, the cruelty, the injustice, the immense stupidity of life at which men strain they swallow at a gulp. They accept the good and evil of life with an equanimity that is above philosophy or below it. It's fortunate for men that they're like this."

(Macquarie Head Press. 6/-)

Mr. Prettyman, aged 64, was the veteran of the party. He guarded the seats in the train most zealously, warding off any intruders that threatened, and was quite the most lively member of the group.

It would seem that Mr. Prettyman had all that a reasonable person could wish for at his age—happy in his job, sufficient means for his simple needs, and a comfortable home.

The author gives us a delightful peep into his home life, of his quiet and affectionate happiness with his wife, of his simple tastes and pleasure in his garden.

His social life revolved round the local institute, and he loved the company of the young people who gathered there. But gradually it dawned upon Mr. Prettyman that he was an old man, standing in the background, and the knowledge brought with it a great sense of loneliness and isolation.

ERIC WILSON was known by his fellow passengers to have an invalid wife, one to whom he devoted every care and attention. But Eric Wilson, the man, was unknown to them all.

The petty, irritating worries of a home that lacked a mistress, the utter exhaustion that he suffered in giving an ever-abundant supply of sympathy to the woman whose thoughts seldom went beyond her own aches and pains, his own half-formulated ideas concerning the happiness he hoped for and had never found.

The silent martyrdom of his days was relieved by thoughts of Janet Woodruff, and he finds a curious happiness in the one or two meetings that they have.

Each is conscious of the attraction they have for each other, but no word of love passes between them. Janet, unable to give to any of her several admirers the love she knows she is capable of, compromises with life and seeks refuge in a marriage that offers security and protection.

Mr. Maude was one of the most pathetic members of the group. A turbulent home with a nagging wife and three unsatisfactory young daughters make his life a veritable hell. Yet he emerges from his home daily, and takes his place inconspicuously in the group of "season ticketers," despising himself for the weak, spineless specimen he knew he was thought to be by those who did not understand.

AMONG the younger members of the party was Anne Bentley, devoured by her love for Proud, who travels daily with her on the train.

The emotional life of these two young people is excellently portrayed, as is also that of Berry, another young man suffering the tortures of an inferiority complex, of love for Anne, and from an idealism that he finds hard to realise in this workaday world.

The story of each of these people is self contained, and portrayed with a simple sincerity that is admirable.

There is a wholesomeness about the book that lifts it above the average story, and to quote Mr. Raymond again its outstanding feature is its "power to haunt."

The concluding chapter, "The Odds Are God's" is an excellent finale, rounding off in a satisfactory manner the thoughts, the conjectures that will come naturally to the mind of most readers.

"Season Ticket," Margaret Isles. (Victor Gollancz. Our copy, Swains.)

SHORT REVIEWS

"TALES FROM EBONY." Harcourt Williams. The great danger that threatens this book is that it will remain in the possession of those adults who purchase it for a child instead of finding its way to its intended owner.

It contains most of the favorite fairy stories of one's youth and some new ones too, told in a delightful fashion.

Harcourt Williams, the author, is a well-known actor, and with his wife, Jean Sterling Mackinlay, he has entertained thousands of children by his gift of story-telling. He will now add thousands more to their number by the collection of these stories into book form.

C. F. Tunnicliffe shares the honors of the book, for his illustrations, in color, make it a production that is far above the average. (Putnam's. 6/-)

"BRAVE MUSIC." Ernest Wells. Noel Coward's "Cavalcade" is brought to mind by this second novel from the author of "Hemp," which was received so favorably when published last year.

Mr. Wells has covered a tremendous canvas, and done it creditably, in his picture of world events which affect, directly or indirectly, the lives of his principal characters. He describes the book in a sub-title as "a chronicle of lives and times," and the chronicle he gives is a very full one.

The story opens in England where, in the laproom of the Blow Bugler public-house, Wapping, three men watch the life blood flow from a sailor whom one of their number has killed.

Luke Strahan, the murderer, escapes, and we meet him next in Melbourne, where he receives an appointment as lighthouse keeper on Spandril Island, one of the most isolated places in the great waste of the Pacific.

These things happened in the days of Queen Victoria and the book, which is in parts a fine example of characterization, takes one through major world events up to 1918. There is a very tender love story woven through its pages. (Angus and Robertson. 6/-)



Mr. W. L. POWER, whose first novel, "Men Need Armour," is a fine piece of imaginative writing. He is a son of Mr. T. P. Power, the well-known Brisbane barrister.

bulent home with a nagging wife and three unsatisfactory young daughters make his life a veritable hell. Yet he emerges from his home daily, and takes his place inconspicuously in the group of "season ticketers," despising himself for the weak, spineless specimen he knew he was thought to be by those who did not understand.

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"Season Ticket," Margaret Isles. (Victor Gollancz. Our copy, Swains.)

"SOPHY CASSMAJOR." Margery Sharp. There is an old-world flavor about this book, in the style in which it is written as well as the people it tells about.

Sophy Cassmajor is an unbelievable innocent, who is literally being "given in marriage" by her aunt and uncle to a middle-aged contemporary of theirs in India. Sophy does not seem to have had much say in the matter. She is very young, very innocent, very obedient, but none of these qualities debars her from falling in love with a romantic young man on the voyage out to India where her marriage is to take place.

Miss Sharp writes with a very delicate touch. Anna Zinkers, who illustrates the story so cleverly, also earns praise for her work. (Arthur Barker. 6/-)

"THE VERY BEAUTIFUL DAYS." Marcus Laursen. This story, translated from the Danish by Ingrid Modin, is a very thoughtful one dealing with the revelations of an aged father, who cut himself adrift from his wife and family in order to enjoy solitude and the opportunities it gave for philosophic reflection.

He was a poet of renown, and sincere in his belief that his first duty was to himself if he were to enrich the world by his poetical genius. In the autumn of his life he changed his viewpoint and revisited the world he had shut out many years before.

The author has given a very convincing analysis of his emotions and those of his family when the reunion takes place between them and of the poet's realisation of failure in those things which are most worth while. (Caswell. 7/6)

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1st Roman Citizen: Nero was torturing prisoners in the palace again last night.
2nd Roman Citizen: Yeah, it's about time someone broke that fiddle.

Some NEW LAUGHS

Conducted by
By L. W.
LOWER

"Most jokes were old and mellow when we were seventeen.
When we are old and mellow, they'll still be evergreen."



"Spare a penny, lady?"



Father: What do you want now? Haven't I just set your husband up in business?
Daughter: Yes, but he wants you to buy him out now.



Unwilling Patient: They tell me that you treated Mrs. Browne for 'flu, and she died of consumption.
Indignant Doctor: Indeed! When I treat my patients for 'flu they die of 'flu!



"Quick, George—there's something in the pool! I thought things couldn't get into it from the sea."

DON'T BLAME the Young for Being SO YOUNG!

—Louise Mack Advises

The New Year coming smilingly towards us with fair hands full of fruits and flowers, garlands of lovely blossoms around its forehead, and a song of joy on its sweet red lips. That's one way of visioning the approaching year.

Or the New Year advancing gravely up to us with a pensive query in its searching, anxious eyes, and a muted cadence in its dayspring hymn.

That's another way of seeing the year that is dawning upon all our horizons near and far.

PERHAPS I am wrong. Perhaps that muted cadence is just an echo of the old year passing away. Perhaps that pensive query in those grave, demanding eyes is really the Old Year's reflection of itself in the glass of time. For truly, when you come think of it, all Old Years must be tinged with sadness, since we all are mortal. We have all had our hearts dragged hither and thither through the year that is gone. We have all suffered, some more, some less.

Yet, here we all are again looking for a New Year with flowers and fruit in its fair white hands, and garlands of rosy blossoms on its shining forehead, and the strange thing is that somehow or other we KNOW that that is the New Year we are all going to meet and enjoy.

APEX writes: "My daughters think more of 'having a good time,' as they call it, than of anything else. Do you think a mother should just sit back and let her girls rush all over the place the way my girls do? They're hardly over at home at night, and their father

is constantly complaining. But they say, 'we earn our fun and we pay for it ourselves.' And so they do. If I remonstrate, it's always, 'Oh, Mum, don't nag, or 'don't be a spoil sport. Mum. This is 1935 nearly!'

Surely a mother ought to recognise by this date (December, 1934), that girls are going to get fun and happiness in their own way, and surely a father ought to recognise that, too.

But there's something else all fathers and mothers ought to recognise, standing as they are on the threshold of 1935 with anxiety in their hearts.

They ought to realise that these are no new things really, these demands of the young for fun, pleasure, variety, action, happiness, gaiety, and gregariousness. All these are simply the spirit of youth itself, "hoping all things," and expecting all things, too.

GIRLS have always wanted fun and liveliness. The difference between now and then

HOBBS HOLBROOK says: For picking or I said 'me Holbrooks' Pure Malt Whisky. It is a brew of excellent quality as is

is that now they get fun, and then they didn't! But they always wanted it, their hearts always cried out for merry-making, and crowds, and bustle, and gaiety, and nice frocks, and nice boys and men, and nice things to eat—always, always, ever since the year one.

Oh, yes, my dear Apex, I know that a few EXTRAS have been added to that list with the coming and going of the Old Year and the New. I know that young people want nice things to drink now, as well as to eat, and nice cigarettes to smoke, as well as nice frocks to wear, but I advise mothers and fathers to sometimes take their children's advice, and don't be spoil sports!

COME, let us try and remember how terribly young hearts want what they want. And then let us try and avoid damping their young spirits, and casting shadows over their brightness, by holding up over them the dark years that have passed and gone.

Why, in 1934—with 1935 just coming in at our gates—turn back to 1894, and say, "We, in 1894, didn't go on like you do in 1934."

Why, of course, we didn't. Times change, and we change with them.

But do we all realise that it was equally so a couple of thousand years ago?

Children learn from life so painfully, yet so inevitably, that I think we all ought to be chary about clouding youth's future and present with our past and its shadows.

A HAPPY New Year, say we. Never in the history of the world have such efforts been made for the happiness of the OLD.

But don't let us forget the younger generation whose past buds in our present, and whose future holds the meaning of our nation that our past essayed to establish, even as their present does, and their future will.

The New Year will be old next year!

BRAINWAVES!

A Prize of 2/6 is paid for each joke used.

SHE (admiringly): Just look at that man's chest development.
He: Chest development! He got that bulge patting himself on the back.

JUNE: Why did Freddy call off his date with you last night?
Sally: Oh, he had his reason.
June: Heavens! When did he recover it?

WIFE (to seasick husband): Henry, these anti-seasick tablets must be taken after meals—run along now and eat a good meal first!

MRS. YOKEL: Did you enjoy the pudding I left boiling for you?
Yokel: My word, it was grand.
Mrs. Yokel: Where did you put the cloth?
Yokel: Was there a cloth?

"DOES my practising make you nervous?" asked the man who was learning to play a saxophone.
"It did when I first heard the neighbors discussing it," replied the man next door, "but now I don't care two hoots what happens to you."

"THE horse I was riding wanted to go one way, and I wanted to go the other."
"Who won?"
"He tossed me for it."

TEACHER: Do you know what happens to little girls who tell stories?
Bright Young Pupil: They ride half-fare!

LITTLE BOBBIE: Are you my Gran?
Gran: Yes, darling—on your father's side.

Little Bobbie: I say, Gran, that's the wrong side to be on in this house.

"I HAVE just chosen the stuff for my wedding dress—I am getting married in a fortnight."
Really, I hope you have made a good choice.

"Yes, white charmeuse, twenty-nine and eleven a yard."

"MY girl," said Harold, "is a decided blonde."
"Yes," said Mabel, "I was with her when she decided."

SELLER: This fire extinguisher, madam, will last for forty years.
Buyer: I shan't be here all that time.
Seller: But when you go you can take it with you!

SHE: Do you know why I won't marry you?
He: I can't think.
She: That's right.

MR. SOAKER: Could you make a water-color sketch of me?
Mr. Palette: All but the nose. I couldn't get that color in water any more than you could.

"LOOK here," said an excited man to a chemist, "you gave me morphine instead of quinine this morning."

"Is that so?" replied the druggist, "then you owe me another eighteen-pence."

LUPESCU a Modern NELL GWYN

*Beautiful Studies of one of the
World's Most Remarkable
Women!*

Lupescu, the fascinating titian-haired friend of King Carol of Rumania, is in the news again.

This extraordinary woman, who is a modern mixture of Nell Gwyn and Madame Pompadour, has caused untold anxiety to the diplomatic corps of Europe.

The Australian Women's Weekly presents here a set of beautiful photographs of Lupescu, which have never been published before.



Supposed to Have Married for Self Protection

THE latest story about Lupescu is that she was secretly married in Vienna to King Carol's aide-de-camp, Captain Antoniani.

This report has been denied from Rumanian sources.

Here is the whole story as told in well-informed Bucharest circles:

For months Madame Lupescu has gone in fear of her life. Her name is on the black list of the Rumanian "Iron Guard," a member of which organisation assassinated the Rumanian Premier, M. Duca.

The enemies of the Throne regard the red-haired Magda Lupescu as the power behind King Carol. She exercises a magnetic influence over the monarch.

At the end of May it seemed that King Carol was again contemplating abandoning her.

She had to leave the country—but came back, and since then her power over her royal lover has been greater than ever.

It was even said that her enemies had resigned themselves to accepting her position as an inevitable fact.

On Black List

THIS is not true. Madame Lupescu is still on the black list, and was obliged to leave Sibiu in September following an assassination warning.

All these months her life has been made miserable. When she showed herself in a theatre, there were shouts of "Remember Helen!"

It is the war-cry of her enemies, who use the name of the exiled Queen Helen as the symbol of righteousness and purity and national consciousness, as against the influences exercised by Lupescu.

Not only in the theatre was the warning heard.

She opens her table napkin when having dinner in her private apartments.

A piece of paper falls out; two words are scribbled on it: "Remember Helen!"

She enters her motor car. A folded paper on her seat. She throws it out of the window. Even without reading it she knows the text it contains.

A radio broadcast is suddenly mysteriously interrupted: "Remember Helen!"

Everywhere "the Lupescu" shows herself the baneful words are shouted—or whispered. She has been persecuted until she can find no rest.

It was these words that drove her again out of the country... and into marriage.

The King's private secretary, M. Dumitrescu, accompanied her on her wanderings through Europe, but had to leave suddenly when his father, a prominent man in Bucharest society, was involved in a scandal.



Now Captain Antoniani stepped in. Since the King returned to the throne, Captain Antoniani has had the task of organising his safety.

He has succeeded up to the present in frustrating all plots against the life of the King. He is the most feared man in Rumania. He is also a master swordsman, so that people treat with respect the woman he takes under his personal protection.

That is what happened to Madame Lupescu.

Captain's Sword

A FEW weeks ago she arrived in Vienna in Captain Antoniani's company. They were soon joined by one of the highest commanders in the Rumanian Army and the Mayor of Bucharest, who happened to have some official business in the Austrian capital.

None of them had anything to do with a marriage ceremony, it is said. But those who know say that Lupescu was duly married in the ballroom of the Rumanian Legation in Vienna, according to Greek Orthodox rites, and that the mayor and the general acted as principal witnesses.

Now the defamations against Rumania's Madame Pompadour have ceased. The scandalmongers weigh their words carefully.

Madame Lupescu, the beautiful Rumanian, is shown here in many moods.

Enmeshed in a web of politics, the career of this woman has been likened to those of Cleopatra, the Pompadour, or Nell Gwyn. The Balkans, where King Carol rules, is the cradle of European earthquakes—and quite a few of them have been attributed to the Lupescu's influence.



Special Xmas Box!!

£5 for the prize letter and 10/6 for every other letter published on the "So They Say" page is awarded this week as a special Christmas box and will continue until further notice!

TELEPHONE NUISANCES

WHY can't neighbors understand that people have telephones installed for a convenience to themselves? I have known men to ring up and ask the telephone owner to deliver unimportant messages to their wives living half a mile or so away, such as "Please tell Mrs. Jones that I will be home half an hour late for lunch to-day." People who have phones installed do not like being imposed on, and it is not always convenient to deliver messages, especially when the call is made at nine or ten o'clock at night.

Another thing: everyone remembers to take twopenny to use a public phone, but seems to overlook the fact when using a private phone and take a ten shilling note. If the phone owner cannot change it the call is a complete loss.

£5 for this letter to Miss F. Reynolds, 81 Ellina St., Paddington, Brisbane.

THE QUEUE HABIT

FOR some reason women are particularly addicted to the queue habit. You would think that women of the kind who crowd to see fashionable weddings, and do not always succeed in seeing them, would have homes, husbands, children, or something that required their attention, but they give the impression of having all the time in the world. Thousands of women left their homes and stood for hours in order to stand in a crowd on the arrival of the Duke of Gloucester, and most of them saw nothing!

As my neighbor said: "I could see him much better on the pictures than I am likely to see him in the flesh, but I just wanted to be there."

Mrs. Barbara McDowell, Cranebrook, Penrith, N.S.W.

IS THIS FAIR?

I WONDER how many women meet with this unenviable experience? During the past week my husband and I have been house-hunting. Almost invariably the first question we were asked was "Have you any children?" On replying in the affirmative, we were informed that the landlord was very particular and would not let to tenants with children. Are married couples to remain childless, or take cottages where the landlord is not particular?

Mrs. P. Mooney, Lennox St., Richmond, N.S.W.

LEAVE THEM AT HOME

IS there anything more distressing than to try and do shopping accompanied by small children? I think not.

Tired, hot, worried, how is one to choose satisfactorily what is needed. And the children themselves, poor dears, are pushed and hustled, scolded and scared until they usually end in tears. What pleasure do they get out of it? Worst of all, they see so many wonderful toys that they cannot have that they are bitterly disappointed with the humbler gifts that fall to their lot.

I know that they are usually taken as a great treat, but, honestly, I think they are far happier at home with the promise of a small gift on mother's return.

Many mothers have no one with whom to leave them, but most of us can find someone who will look after them for a few hours. A small gift works wonders here, too!

M. D. Horn, Wagstaffe Point, N.S.W.

QUITE INSPIRING

IS it something to be ashamed of these days for housewives to be seen sweeping or mopping their porches in the mornings? So often one sees them, as the tram car or pedestrian passes, pop inside and close the door, to resume again, when all is clear.

In my opinion, it is an inspiring sight to see a clean tidy woman busy at her front door in the early morning.

Mrs. Florence Fraser, 134 Riversdale Rd., Camberwell, E5, Melbourne.



Is Melbourne Rejoicing Too Long?

IT is easy to see that Miss M. E. Brown has no part in our Centenary celebrations, otherwise she would not think them too long.

Each and every organisation desires to take part in the festivities and show the part that is played by it in the life of the community. Imagine the middle of there would be, and the jealousies of clashing interests, if people attempted to fit every display, show, and sporting activity into a short period of, say, two months. Having the celebrations spread over twelve months gives everyone an opportunity to see the whole life of the community at its best.

Mrs. J. Wright, 133 Charles St., Northcote, N15, Vic.

Yes, Too Long

I AGREE with Miss Brown that the Centenary celebrations are being drawn out. Although a Victorian, I consider that two months would have been quite sufficient. People interested would be present during the first few weeks. The same applies to the South Australian Centenary.

Mrs. W. Law, 292 Maroubra Bay Rd., Maroubra, N.S.W.

Country Woman's View

WHAT is one year of festivity in one hundred years of work and progress? Many in the country could not rush to the city and enter into the spirit of celebration if it lasted only for a couple of months. But within the next six months practically all "hayseeds," by taking a trip to the city, will have been able to take a more personal and interesting part in the celebrations; and feel more satisfied.

City folk, if tired of such rush, crowds, and festival making, can easily keep well out of it to a great extent. Also, I think, the longer our Centenary the longer our memories, years later, of Victoria-Melbourne Centenary, 1934.

Miss P. M. West, High St., Maldon, Vic.

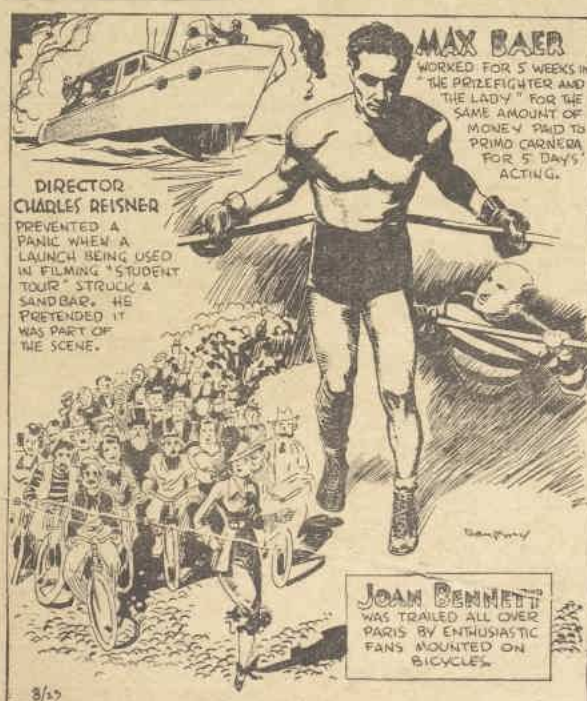
Hard To Keep the Pace

CERTAINLY the idea of making the South Australian Centenary of a shorter duration is an excellent one. Many families surely find it hard to keep the pace, and when amusement causes financial strain it ceases to be a pleasurable time.

W. Phipps, jun., P.O., Taroom, via Wandooan, Qld.

Screen Oddities

By CAPTAIN FAWCETT



There Are People Who Affect Their Watches

I LIKE Mrs. T. J. Wilson (8/12/34) know a young man who for years could not wear a watch, either on his wrist or in his pocket without it stopping.

Whether electricity caused this or not I do not know, but I do know that for about eight years he could not wear a watch.

Miss E. A. Polkinghorne, 64 Richmond Rd., Westbourne Park, S.A.

"What Do I... Like the Most?"

I THINK it would be immensely interesting to know what some of the women contributors to The Australian Women's Weekly like most.

Here are some of my likes and dislikes: Comfort, I think. And old painted satinwood, and cats, and prize-fights, and dancing, and Spanish shawls, and looking at the ocean, and having my own way.

And I dislike argument and fat women, and people who tell the sort of lies that simply insult your intelligence, and long ear-rings, and intolerance.

Miss Alva Satori, Teven, Ballina, N.S.W.

She Cannot Wear One

I BELIEVE there is electricity in some persons more than in others (in answer to Mrs. T. J. Wilson, 8/12/34). I myself cannot wear a watch, for if I do, in less than five minutes it has stopped. But as soon as I take it off and lay it down, or hand it over to someone else to wear the watch will tick merrily on.

Mrs. M. McCall, Bourke, N.S.W.

Too Much Electricity

RE Mrs. Wilson's letter. I do believe that the electricity in a person's body affects a watch, and prevents it from working.

I have heard of several similar cases, and one person has to wear a thickness of leather under her wristlet watch to prevent any contact with her body. It must, indeed, have something to do with a person's system, for the average of people to whom this happens is only about one in ten, and we have all a certain amount of electricity in our bodies.

Miss M. Kindervater, Tooley St., Maryborough, Qld.

Refusing Consent For Marriage Of Young Couples

P. FREDERICKS' letter (8/12/34) touches a vital subject when she asks, "Should parents refuse their consent till the girl is of age?" I don't think parents or anyone else should try to prevent a young couple from marrying if they want to—that is provided they are not absurdly young and there is nothing against the man. The only people to decide such an important matter as marriage should be the couple concerned. Friends and relations should do all they can to make the young people's path smooth. Match-makers and match-breakers are a curse.

Miss G. J. Baerman, 3 Gray St., Pt. Noarlunga, S.A.

Should Refuse

PARENTS should refuse consent of marriage where the girl is under age, but should not attempt to prevent the couple from seeing each other. In fact, if possible, throw them more in each other's company and get them to go out together and mix in more with their friends. Girls and boys of 18 or 19 do not know their own minds, and in most cases have had no experience before. Careful handling of this problem would save many of these unhappy boy and girl marriages we read so much about to-day.

Mrs. Thompson, 189 Miller St., North Sydney, N.S.W.

Let Them Marry

I AGREE with P. Fredericks (A.W.W., 8/12/34) that to give consent may save a lot of heartache. Too often ruined lives, tragedy, and bitter, life-long regrets have followed parents' refusal of consent where a young couple desire to marry, and nothing can be advanced against the match except that the girl is not quite the age. I think that in such a case, if the girl is of marriageable age, parental consent should be given.

Recently in Queensland the law has taken a hand in this matter where a father refused his consent. On the application through a solicitor to the court the magistrate overruled the father's objection and gave consent to the marriage.

Mrs. W. T. Zandler, Cherdet Cottage, Nerang, South Coast Line, Qld.

Use a Little Tact

I AGREE with P. Fredericks (8/12/34) that parents should not refuse their consent to a girl's marriage, even if under age, providing the man can give her a good home and is of good character. Often, however, by using a little tact, they may bring the girl to realise that a longer engagement may provide her with lots of fun, less responsibility, and an easier start in married life later. Thus they can gain their end without loss of friendship.

Miss Anne Duke, Ramsay Av., East Kew, E5, Vic.

Depends on Girl

RE P. Fredericks' article (8/12/34). I think parents should use their own discretion. In some cases a girl is quite capable of managing a home long before she is of age, and, again, in some cases (as is easily seen by looking around us) it is not until she has reached full years of discretion that she is able to make a success of marriage.

So I think it mostly depends on the nature of the girl whether or not her parents give their consent before she is of age.

D. Grant, Box 73, Frankston, Vic.

Encourage the Youngsters

TO my way of thinking, young couples should be encouraged to marry—that is when there is nothing against either party as regards health or character—of course, not meaning just boys or girls, but a young woman of eighteen or up, and the man twenty-one and in constant work.

From my observation, children of young couples are usually stronger and healthier than those of older parents, while the parents are more likely to pass over their grievances in an easier manner than in later marriages when these same grievances seem to wound much deeper.

Mrs. Maude Dodds, c/o 46 Bondi Rd., Waverley, N.S.W.

WON'T PICK FLOWERS

A FRIEND of mine has a beautiful garden of which he is very proud. Being a lover of flowers he naturally likes to see blooms in the house, but positively refuses to allow any member of the family to pick anything from his own garden.

He is willing to buy as many flowers as are desired, regardless of cost, stating as his reason for this that, after spending so much time on the flowers he wants them to be on show for everyone to see, not only for his own family. What do readers think of this idea? I myself don't see why he couldn't pick a few from his own garden.

Miss M. Etta, corner Argyle and Chapel Sts., St. Kilda, S2, Melbourne.

NOSE OUT OF JOINT

INSTEAD of children being a bond between husband and wife, how often does one find that the father actually resents them? When the new baby arrives, poor hubby's nose is quite out of joint.

A woman is foolish to wrap herself up in the newborn, to the detriment

ETIQUETTE



IF YOU MUST shake hands, don't apologise for extending a gloved hand, it is quite unnecessary.

of the husband, who, hoping against hope, fondly believes he will again reign supreme. "When the little one is older." But he is usually fostering a delusion, as this ideal mother often forgets her relationship to the father, instead of making the child a link between the two of them.

D. E. Prior, 4 Duncan St., Ballarat, Vic.

A PLEA FOR FIFTY

ONE hears so much nowadays that people who have attained the mature age of 50 or over now belong to the last generation.

Well, that may be so, but all such are not necessarily antiquated. Many are broadminded and youthful in their ideas of life generally.

They have grown up with this generation, and have quite happily adapted their attitude to present-day conditions of life, and are quite ready to believe that every generation has some good points.

E. Bevilacqua, Church St., Highgate, S.A.

GIVE US MORE LEISURE

THERE is a lot of discussion to-day as to whether a shorter working week would really benefit workers. What would they do with the spare time at their disposal, it is asked.

But just think for a moment of the inconveniences our immediate ancestors had to contend with, both as regards hygiene and ordinary domestic work. Now that woman has so much leisure compared with the "good old days" does she find time hang heavily on her hands? Not at all. Children are much better cared for both as regards body and mind. Home dressmaking has improved. Whereas a print frock was just a print frock 30 years ago, it is often a work of art now, as also is cooking. Just think of the women's papers, catering for all tastes, from gardening to society news and everything you can think of in between. Most of the big shops are continually bringing out something new in the way of arts and crafts, and have permanent demonstrations and many pupils. I have only mentioned the ordinary housewife's activities. I am quite sure that it would be just as much advantage to our working men to have this extra leisure as it has been to women, and it would certainly help to solve the unemployment problem.

Mrs. Oakes, Eborata, Maroubra Bay Rd., Fagewood, Maroubra, N.S.W.



MOLLY RAYNOR, as Amelia, in a comic courtship scene from the forthcoming production of "Grandad Rudd." Her bashful suitor is George Lloyd (Dan), and William McGowan (Joe), an interested spectator.

PREFERS COMEDY to DRAMA

MOLLY RAYNOR

How many gifted comedians we hear of who confess to a hankering to play Hamlet! But Molly Raynor, who will be seen shortly in "Grandad Rudd," with Bert Bailey, rejoices in her broad comedy roles. She does not want to play in serious drama or take highly emotional parts. Nor does she care about interpreting delicate fantasies.

Her natural inclination is to broad comedy, and she does not mind how grotesque she has to make herself. With her big goggles she has earned the sobriquet of "Miss Harold Lloyd," at the Cinesound studio, where she has recently been working.

ONE of three gifted sisters, Molly Raynor might now be touring the world with Betty and Joan in their Theatre of Youth caravan, but for the fact that she laughed too easily. The family name is Raynor, but Molly, for her own stage purpose, spells her with an "O."

Molly was associated with Joan in "T.O.T." activities, but found it too serious.

"I couldn't concentrate on that kind of thing," she confesses. "There were too many things I wanted to laugh at. So Joan took our younger sister, Betty, in hand. She filled my place."

"As you know, the two have made a splendid success of the thing. They have had an amazingly successful tour. I last heard of them from Sweden. I expect them back in Australia next June."

Molly Raynor plays the broad comedy role of "Amelia" in the Cinesound motion picture, "Grandad Rudd," soon to be released. It is a part after her own heart, and she admits that she has thoroughly enjoyed her work in the production.

A "Straight" Part

HER first picture was a "straight" part in "On Our Selection," something similar to Elaine Hamill's "Betty" in "Grandad Rudd." She was pressed into service against her will, she says, and was thoroughly miserable in the part. Later she played "Pansy" in "Hayseeds."

"I had a part in 'Strike Me Lucky,'" says this lively little lady, "but by the time the gentleman with the scissors was finished with the picture, it could



A HEAD of Miss Raynor, made up as Amelia, which has the look of a female Harold Lloyd.

hardly be called a part. My friends find me rather a disappointment in it, but they can't blame me.

"It wasn't I that said the things to which the censor objected. In fact, they were said to me, and I had to go out of the scenes with the others. Rather adding insult to injury, I think. But my 'Amelia' in 'Grandad' is great fun. 'On Our Selection' was funny, but this picture is fifty per cent. funnier, in my opinion. I like broad comedy. It is suited to such talent as I possess."

"I prefer to help people to laugh rather than to make them cry, or speed up their heart-beats. And naturally I enjoy doing the work that suits me better than doing work that I feel doesn't suit me."

Miss Raynor, off stage, looks anything but a "broad comedy" artist. She would have little trouble in inducing "heart-beats" if she were romantically inclined, in a stage sense.

But comedienne of real talent are rare, and it is a good thing for entertainment that there are artists ready, and even eager, to sink their individualities and efface their personal attractiveness "just for the fun of the thing."

The Raynors are New Zealand girls. Molly made a trip home about four years ago with the American Comedy Company, but was involved in a wreck. She hasn't risked it since.

PRODUCTION NOTES

QUOTA legislation, with a view to assisting local film production, is much discussed at the moment, and until it is known definitely whether such legislation will pass the New South Wales Parliament certain plans for production are in abeyance. The Victorian Parliament seems to have abandoned the measure enforcing a quota of local films, which was introduced into the Lower House last session.

On account of this uncertainty, Mr. F. W. Thring, of Eftex Films, has temporarily closed down his studio in Melbourne.

THERE is a good deal of activity observable in New South Wales, however, the only other State of the Commonwealth where production has been regularly carried on.

Mr. John Longden and Mr. Frederick Ward have formed a company to produce "Highway Romance," on which they propose to start work early in the New Year.

Mr. Jack Peretval also is arranging for a film in which travel and drama will be combined.

Meanwhile National Studios Ltd., a company formed for local film production in which Gaumont-British has a large interest, is going ahead with its preparations for an extensive studio.

PRIVATE VIEWS

By BEATRICE TILDESLEY

★ ★ ONE NIGHT OF LOVE

Grace Moore, Tullio Carminati, Mona Barrie. (Columbia.)

OPERA on the screen is not entirely novel. Have we not had tenors? But to hear a lyric soprano of this quality in a delight the film public has not tasted before. It is a voice of singular sweetness and purity, beautifully reproduced by a new recording process, and its possessor has the considerable asset for screen purposes of a graceful, pleasing person.

The story of a girl found singing in a cafe in Milan by a temperamental Italian music teacher (Tullio Carminati) who insists on preparing her for a grand opera career, reminds us at times of "Tribby." She is so completely swayed by her master, though she jibs now and then at his physical culture exercises, which strike us, too, as somewhat fanciful. But when in a fit of resentment at his strictness she leaves him, she can do nothing with the instrument he has perfected. It needs his inspiring presence in the prompter's box to encourage her to her great triumph.

Miss Moore sings excerpts from "Carmen" and "Aida" during the course of the film. One particularly charming episode is the singing from the balcony. Carminati, no mean singer himself, excels here in his acting. And Mona Barrie gives a crispy finished performance as his erstwhile pupil and mistress who tries later to win him from Miss Moore.—Liberty; com. Dec. 26.

★ ★ THE GAY DIVORCEE

Ginger Rogers, Fred Astaire. (R.K.O.)

FOLLOWING up a most successful partnership in "Flying Down to Rio," in which they demonstrated the "Caricola," Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire here perform that no less heady measure, the "Continental." Astaire probably can't help dancing; he does it with such gay abandon all over the furniture. And as for Miss Rogers, she is supple grace personified, as she whirls with him.

The plot which makes a peg for this display of virtuosity is a complicated misunderstanding due to the fumbling mismanagement of divorce proceedings initiated by Miss Rogers to rid herself of a tedious scientist. Actually she need not have bothered. But the arrangements made by her lawyer (Edward Everett Horton), who is, as ever, amusing, but not very successful in counterfeiting an English solicitor, bring in his friend, Astaire, who is already in hot pursuit of the lady. And Alice Brady, rather too artificial in manner as her aunt, provides a study of inconsequence. The production is enhanced by excellent photography and catchy music. And the humor of professional correspondents is exploited to the utmost. A very bright affair.—Regent; com. Dec. 26.

★ ★ THE CAPTAIN HATES THE SEA

Victor McLaglen, John Gilbert, Helen Vinson. (Columbia.)

ONE test of a picture—and a pretty good test, too—is whether it keeps you on the stretch waiting for what happens. After the first few minutes of this one we sat well forward, anxious not to miss any of the byplay of the variegated comedy, which has just enough shadows of tragedy and crime painted in to balance the composition. The admirable economy with which this shipload of passengers and crew are presented as individual characters leads to exaggeration. But they are all pointed, recognisable caricatures. Leon Errol's chief steward in the essence of all chief stewards who exact tips in certain circumstances and drink with favored passengers in their cabins.

We felt that Wynne Gibson, as the unhappy little "Goldie," reverses form rather suddenly at the end. But it is apparent that something has been cut from this part. For the rest, there is Victor McLaglen's policeman turned private detective, a joyous creation. Almost as good is John Gilbert, as a newspaper man who comes on the trip to forget drink and forget his actress, and who drinks steadily aboard and returns to her arms on the wharf. Then there is Helen Vinson, as the smart crook, who wavers on board, but whose instinct reasserts itself in New York harbor.

We must not omit the presiding genius of a voyage which includes the rescue of a passenger and a very casual fire. This is Walter Connolly, a captain who is filled with loathing at the sight of passengers. How true that must be. This is a very lively entertainment indeed.—Capitol; com. Dec. 28.

★ BEYOND BENGAL

(Reviewed by E.M.T.)

Harry Schenk. (Showmen's Pictures Inc.)

ONCE more unto the jungle! And this time, praise be, not in the interests of any zoo. The photography is excellent; but if we have to see a python crushing the bones of its victims, why not a cameraman instead of the poor little

OUR FILM GRADING SYSTEM

★★★ Three stars—
excellent.
★★ Two stars—
good films.
★ One star—
average films.
No stars no good.

honey bear who was offered up to make a cinematic holiday?

Indeed, in this film the animals have the sympathetic roles. We complain with the gibbon when it is frog-marched off. The natives are unobtrusively efficient and, except for one clumsy introduction of love interest and another of comedy, they are not misshandled by the producer. But when the boys in the boat halt the wild elephant for the sake of a good camera angle, we are glad to see them upset. With their large dignity and their lumbering strength, elephants—both wild and tame—present satisfying screen personalities. And even the crocodiles, as they atreack through the water, have an aura of grace and power.

The inhabitants of the wild have been exploited too long. It would be a pleasant fantasy to show them taking long shots—with camera or rifle—at the denizens of Hollywood.—Lyceum; com. Dec. 28.

★ ORDERS IS ORDERS

(Reviewed by E.M.T.)

James Gleason, Charlotte Greenwood, Cyril Maude. (Gaumont-British.)

Oil and water won't mix, but when you put them together a film is formed.

Here we have the humors of military life, according to a pattern familiar to the readers of London "Punch," combined with the high-power absurdities of moviedom. James Gleason, as an American producer with his mob of photographers and supers, invades the barracks where Cyril Maude is Colonel in command, and almost, but not quite, succeeds in his ambition of "putting the British Army on the map"—or rather, the screen.

The casting is first-rate. The Tommies and their officers are recognisable types with authentic accents, and so are the film-makers. Charlotte Greenwood, as the producer's assistant, is seen to advantage in her billiards match with the Colonel, after she has persuaded him to "be a sport!"—Civic; com. Dec. 21.

★ THE CIRCUS CLOWN

Joe E. Brown, Patricia Ellis, Dorothy Burgess. (Warner Bros.)

NOT only is Joe E. Brown a comedian with an endearing and individual style; he is also a trapeze artist of considerable merit. He proves the latter claim in this picture which recounts the adventures of a raw country youth who has the circus in his blood—naturally enough because his father had been a big-top acrobat—and who joins a travelling show in spite of parental opposition.

How it comes about that this callow lad is first fascinated by the female impersonator of the troupe, and is later believed by the rampantly jealous knife-thrower to be making love to his flirtatious wife (Dorothy Burgess) provides several highly amusing passages. And his performance with the heroine (Patricia Ellis) on the flying trapeze, as substitute for her befuddled brother, makes an exciting climax to end on. But what we enjoyed most was the slumbering Brown having his feet tickled by a lion who had strayed from his cage to the dormitory tent, and the scene where Brown outwits the king of beasts. After his last, and particularly wide-mouthed howl we were not surprised that the lion gave it up.

ELINOR NORTON

Clair Trevor, Hugh Williams. (Fox.)

MARY ROBERTS RINEHART is an author of some repute. But this film version of her novel cannot be counted a success. We may wonder why it was attempted, since the psychological reactions of the characters obviously require the more leisurely development of the book form. As the story is conveyed on the screen it is poor melodrama. Even more prejudicial is the casting. Hugh Williams is an attractive player, and could be the neurotic husband well enough if he were not also required to be American. But Claire Trevor, that bright business girl of previous films, finds a heavy dramatic role beyond her.

The slack-jawed Norman Foster does suitably for her early lover, and Gilbert Roland is colorless but possible as her final choice. But the only person who carries conviction is Henrietta Crossman, as the old grandmother. And we do wish that Hollywood would give the war a miss.—Civic; com. Dec. 21.

RADIO HIGHLIGHTS from 2GB

THAT is the late Harry Dearth who persuaded his son to come out to Australia and settle—he had been impressed by the people and the country during a concert tour in 1919. Harry Dearth, Jr., came, took a good look at the land, then turned to the theatre, where he stayed for three years understanding big parts and playing small ones. He might be there still if he hadn't heard radio calling. By the way, Harry Dearth's mother was an even greater musician than his father. Some readers from the Old Country may remember her as Edith Bristow. Mr. Dearth is already being heard regularly as an announcer from 2GB.

Mason Wood, who also joins 2GB, is an actor and producer of repute. He first came to Australia with Oscar Asche, but presently he heard the call of radio. Indeed, he heard an early call, for Mason Wood has been production manager with 3AW, Melbourne, from the time that station started up till some months ago, when he again returned to the stage, touring Melbourne.

Once again 2GB is to the fore in introducing two more outstanding personalities to the air. The first to be heard is Harry Dearth—though not the Harry Dearth known to listeners all over Australia by his recorded songs and his fine baritone voice.

and Adelaide with J. C. Williamson as stage producer.

While he was associated with 3AW, Mr. Mason Wood was an outstanding writer of radio plays, many a brilliant feature coming from his pen.

With these additions to the staff of 2GB, Mr. Eric Colman becomes chief announcer.

THE PRIZE LETTER

FOR the last four weeks 2GB has offered a prize of 5/- for the letter received each week offering the most constructive criticism of its programmes and personalities. Each week the winning letter has been published in these columns. This week the prize goes to Lawrence Montfort, Elgin St., Richmond.

Park, East Gordon, N.S.W. We publish it herewith—

"2GB has always stood for two things—quality and dignity. That is the simple solution as to why it has remained the premier Sydney station."

"So many of the other stations sacrifice quality for quantity with most unfortunate results for the listener. Another outstanding attribute about 2GB has been its progressive spirit. Witness the various serials and American recordings now so deservedly popular. I do not think I am far out in saying that 2GB practically pioneered this form of entertainment. If not pioneered, it certainly developed this section of broadcasting programmes when other stations considered the public did not want or would not care for them. 2GB gave listeners what they wanted; other stations what they thought the public desired."

"In respect to serials and plays, no one has done more to put 2GB on the map in this respect than George Edwards and Neil Stirling. No radio performers are more highly deserving of every listener's praise than this hard-worked but deservedly popular pair. How Edwards can possibly cope with the volume of material he has to put over, and in a versatile manner not equalled by any other radio artist in the Commonwealth, is a mystery. He alone knows!"

"Once again 2GB's progressiveness is noted in the introduction of Wide Range recordings in their musical numbers. This while the other Sydney stations were hardly giving it a thought. First in the radio broadcasting field, as usual. The sheer tone brilliance and note fidelity of these Wide Range recordings are a delight. Undoubtedly 2GB is giving us in 1934 in this regard what other stations will—I hope—present to us later in 1935. There can be no shadow of doubt as to Wide Range. It is so perfect as to make other recordings sound almost flat after hearing it."

"One small—very minor—destructive criticism. It is a great pity that 'The Adventures of Archie' cannot be repeated during the evening session for the vast army of listeners who cannot possibly enjoy this inimitable serial during the morning, when they are in the city at work."

"Practically every 2GB announcer, with one or two exceptions, has a fine, cultured, dignified speaking voice. This factor counts a tremendous lot with, I consider, at least 85 per cent of the listeners.—LAWRENCE MONTFORT."

Readers are asked to note that this competition is being discontinued until further notice. 2GB again thanks all those who responded.

HUMORESQUE

EVERYBODY knows Dvorak as the composer of "Humoresque." It was made world-famous years ago by the silent picture of that name, when the publicity agents described it as "a laugh on life with a tear behind it." On that occasion every cinema orchestra added it to its repertoire. Few people know that "Humoresque" was written by Dvorak as an obligato to "The Old Folks at Home." When the great violinist Kubelik was falling to draw the houses he deserved in Melbourne, Melba offered to act as assisting artist, and on that occasion sang "Old Folks at Home" with Kubelik playing "Humoresque." This and other music by Dvorak will be featured in the "Famous Composer" session at 12.45 p.m. on Sunday, December 30.

A SCOTCH NEW YEAR

THE Scottish people have laid claim to the New Year as their own particular festival. Whether it is because they think that New Year resolutions are the one thing that can be broken without the expense of replacing them, we don't know. New Year's Eve programme from 2GB is definitely Scottish. At 9.15, Walter Kingsley, baritone, will sing four favorite Scottish songs, including the lovely, "Ye Banks and Braes." At 10.15 the Scottish brand of humor will be given an outing by Will Pyffe, and at 11.55 the New Year will be welcomed in with "Auld Lang Syne." The second part of The Australian Women's Weekly Feature Session on the preceding Saturday, December 29, will be "Maurice of Burna," presented by Joseph Hislop and the Light Opera Company.

INVISIBLE MENDING

Damaged Garments Re-woven. Torn, Burnt, Moth-eaten Suits, Costumes, Carpets, etc. INVISIBLELY Re-woven.

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90 PITT ST. Phone: BW6652
JOIN my Pen Friends' Club, and make interesting new friends all over Australia. Only fee, send P.N. for 2/6 to Shirley Keene, P.O. Box 18, Coogee, N.S.W.***

A POET TALKS FROM 2GB

TWENTY years ago, there were a few people who said that Mary Gilmore was the greatest woman poet that Australia had produced. To-day, she is not only the greatest woman poet, but the most outstanding woman of letters in Australia. Her activities through her seventy years of life have been remarkably diverse. She has befriended three generations of writers, helped them with her advice and encouragement, she has pioneered woman's journalism in Australia, fought for political justice, been a member of the Film Censorship Appeal Board, and published five or six books of poetry. But her most valuable work has been her attempt to get the atmosphere of the pioneering days down into record before it passes out of the memory of man, and to preserve the legends and names of the blacks before they, too, pass.

Such books of memoirs as "Old Days, Old Ways" will always remain as a memorial to her work. "Some Reminiscences," a talk by Mary Gilmore from 2GB, Sunday, December 30, at 7.40 p.m.

On account of the holiday next week, The Australian Women's Weekly will not be on sale in some places until Thursday.

MY LADY'S GARTER

EVIDENTLY George Edwards and Maurice Francis, who writes his plays, know what Shakespeare knew: There is a wealth of dramatic material in English history. And because, when it comes to detail there is such a diversity of opinion about most historical incidents, the same material can be treated a hundred times and still be new. Take an incident like the famous scene at the Court of Edward the Third when the Countess of Salisbury lost her garter. The gentlemen of the Court sniggered, but the King stopped and put the garter about his own leg, remarking, "Honi soit qui mal y pense." That is about as far as history goes, yet to the dramatist, the dropped garter and the King's remark might mean all sorts of mysteries and intrigues. It will be interesting to see what Maurice Francis will have to say about that garter in the George Edwards production, "The Order of the Garter," from 2GB on Tuesday, January 1, at 9.30 p.m.

Naturally Gifted Men To Visit Sydney

COMMENCING JANUARY 3

Messrs. Lyons wish to announce that they have secured a suite of rooms at THE GRAND HOTEL, HUNTER STREET, and will be pleased to interview anyone on THURSDAY, JANUARY 3.

In this issue we propose to give a short article showing the effect this combined treatment has on sickness and disease, and HOW THESE REMARKABLY GIFTED MEN EFFECT CURES BY A FEW WEEKS TREATMENTS, many of which have baffled medical skill for years.



Mr. James Lyons



Mr. Basil Lyons

MRS. KEMP-S T E R, 223 A D E L A I D E ST., Hawthorn, Vic. BLOOD PRESSURE.

MR. C. H. NORMAN, of Bruce-dale, W A G R A RHEUMATISM.

MRS. EATHER, 44 Buckingham St., Sydney. NEURITIS OF THE SPINE.

MISS HAMILTON, Dunally, Singleton. NERVOUS BREAKDOWN.

MISS ALICE HOSKINSON, Arian Park. RHEUMATOID - ARTHRITIS.

MRS. MAHON, Liverpool Rd., Ipswich, Qld. ASTHMA & BRONCHITIS.

MR. COWDEN, of Muttama. ATROPHY OF THE MUSCLES. MISS O'BILLY (late of Goolagong), N.S.W. PERIPHERAL NEURITIS.

MR. P. O'CONNOR, 3 Napier St., St. Melbourne. BRADYPSYCHIA. DIGESTION & CHRONIC CONSTIPATION.

MR. PASSLOW, Hill St., Junee. CHRONIC INDIGESTION.

MR. JOSIAH SOUTHWELL, of Burrows. HEART TROUBLES.

MISS L. TRACY, Lake Chalm, Vic. STOMACH & LIVER TROUBLES & PARALYSIS.

MR. ARTHUR H. KERRY, 29 Linacre Rd., Hampton, Victoria. CHRONIC CONSTIPATION & DYSPEPSIA.

After reading some of the wonderful results achieved by the Messrs. Lyons, if you are a sufferer don't you think you owe it to yourself to at least interview them when their services are available in Sydney?

Maybe your doctor has given up your case as hopeless. Maybe you yourself despair of ever regaining your health and strength, and you are downcast and despondent. Messrs. Lyons may be able to do for you what they have done for hundreds of others. Many people have said that no sooner had their hands been placed upon them than they feel renewed health and strength and vitality pulsating through their bodies.

You need have no faith to be cured. They do not use any of the known methods in any shape or form whatever. The Treatment is a perfectly natural process imparted from their hands. It is a great gift of birth, unique in all Australia.

Interviews: Messrs. Lyons will be pleased to interview anyone who is suffering from any of the ailments mentioned above.

No Charge: They make no charge for consultations.

No Fees In Advance: They do not ask for fees in advance, and will tell the patients if they think they cannot cure them.

Success: They do not wish to treat a case unless they feel sure of success.

FEES: The fees are moderate and within the reach of all.

Limited Number: Messrs. Lyons can only make a limited number of appointments for the course of treatment.

Space will not permit of giving full-length Letters and Testimonials, but the following are a few names taken at random for hundreds of similar letters, and will show the wide scope of illnesses that this treatment covers, as well as the great boon it has been to sufferers who have found that drugs, lotions, herbs, batteries, electricity, massage, etc., were of no avail in their particular case.

MR. LES PICKERING, of Malvor St., Cheltenham, SCOTLAND.

MRS. WINTER, Port Clinton, S.A. NEURITIS.

MRS. W. LAWRENCE, 66 Jordan St., Malvern, Vic. (late of T.M.C. N.S.W.) CHRONIC HEADACHES.

MRS. RYAN (late of Grogg Grogg), 24 Bent St., Moonee Ponds, Vic. NERVOUS BREAKDOWN.

APPOINTMENTS MAY BE MADE FOR INTERVIEWS by writing to Messrs. Lyons, BOX 1219, G.P.O., MELBOURNE. Their Book, "THE ROMANCE OF TWO NATURALLY GIFTED MEN," may also be had, post free, by writing to the same address.***



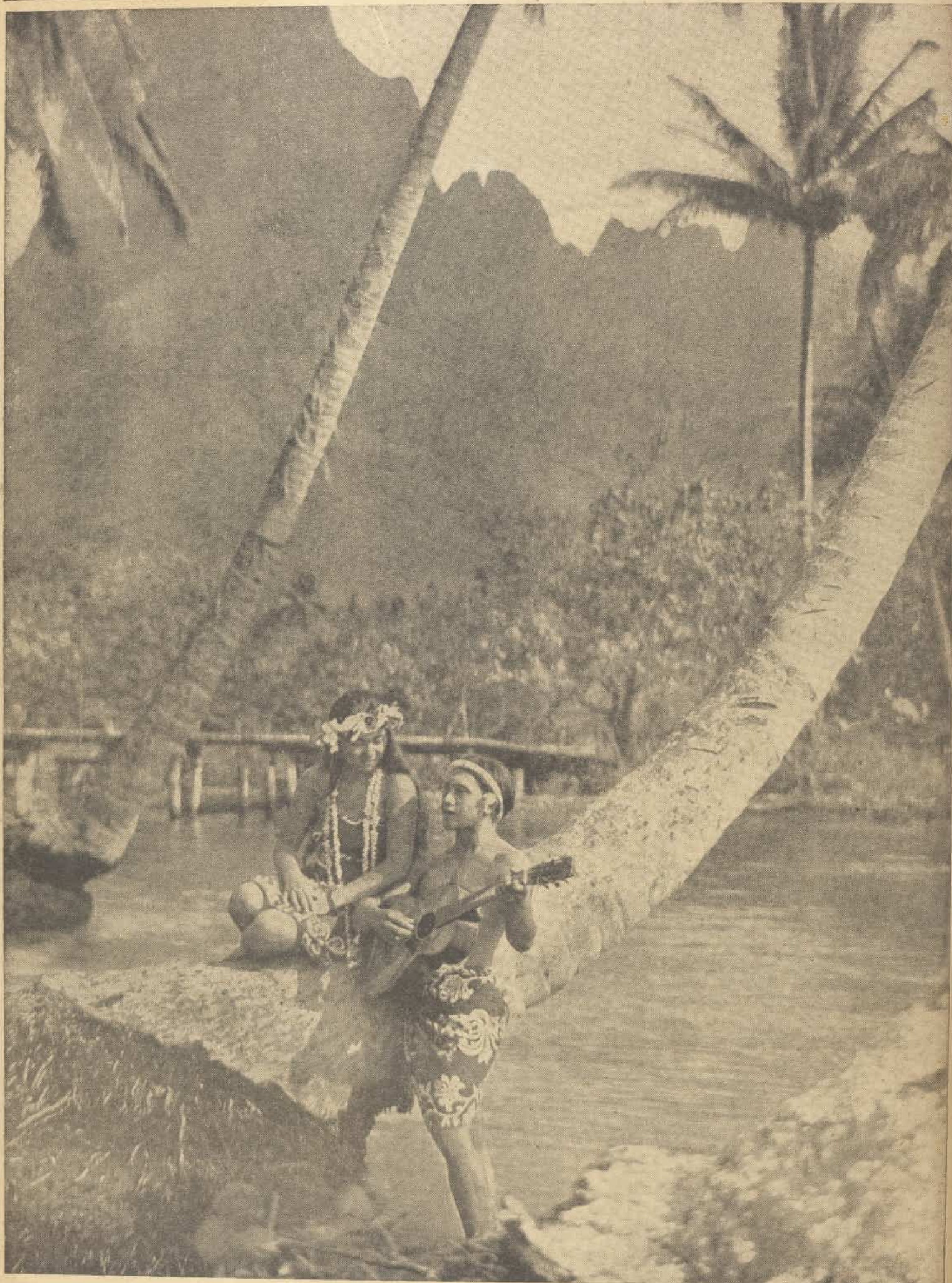
For more than one hundred years visitors to Sydney have stayed at Petty's

Petty's is the oldest established of Sydney's hotels, and it would seem that in its century and more of service this fine old hotel has acquired a flair for making its guests comfortable. Situated midway between Wynyard City Railway Station and the Harbour Bridge Approach, it is at once restfully quiet, and yet very convenient to all centres. Appointments are modern, the service is perfect, and the cuisine will delight. Yet a very moderate tariff is featured.

Wire or Write for Reservations.

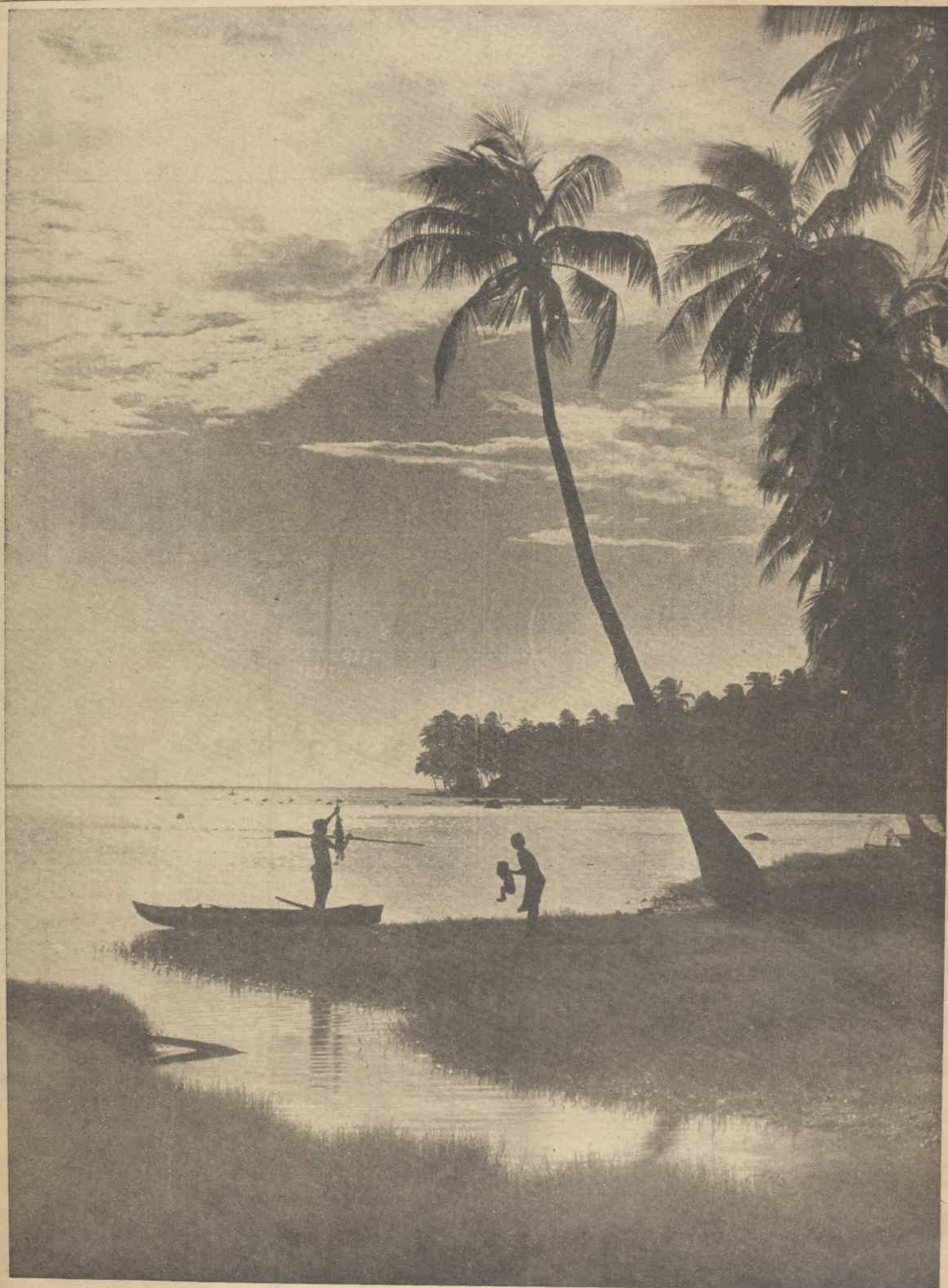
PETTY'S HOTEL
For COMFORT, SERVICE and CONVENIENCE

York St. Sydney. R. J. Langley Manager



BLUE skies and blue lagoons, green palms, and green grass — an ideal setting for this sunbrowned maid and sunbrowned youth in one of Nature's Edens. And what better way of spending an hour than singing to the strains of a Hawaiian guitar.

Tahitian Morning—



—and Evening

WHEN the Sun drives his flaming chariots across the sky pursued by Night, and the fisherman comes home with his catch. On the beach the young mother waits with her child. The picture is complete. Both these photos were taken by Frederick Simpson, of America, who visited Australia recently.

Mandrake the Magician

THE PEOPLE YOU WILL MEET ARE—

Ambassador Vandergriff: From whom important papers have been stolen by The Cobra: A powerful arch-criminal. Inspector Sheldon: Of the U.S. Secret Service, with Barbara: His daughter, and Tommy Lord: His assistant, embark on the pursuit of The Cobra, guided by information given them by

Mandrake: The Master Magician. On the liner on which they are travelling they meet

Gordini Talon: Who ingratiates himself with them by saving Barbara from a deadly cobra that appears in her cabin. Barbara becomes friendly with Talon, but the shades of Mandrake and

Lothar: His Nubian slave, appear. Mandrake warns Barbara that she is being watched.



Intimate Jottings

Did you know, my dear Juliet, that—

Two old Australian families were united in matrimony at the recent wedding of Betty Cowper, great granddaughter of the late Dean Cowper, and Franklin Pain, grandson of the late Bishop Pain, of Victoria?

Five Bachelors

FANCY, Juliet, having five merry and bright brothers-in-law living on the same property. This will be the fate of pretty Marcia Cordeaux when she is married to her fiance, Clifford Ward, of Yackerboon, Denman. However, that is all in the future, as their engagement has only just been announced. In any case, Marcia is used to large families, as she is the fourth of the very attractive daughters of Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Cordeaux, of Bowral. Cliff will join his prospective "in-laws" at Jervis Bay for the summer holidays.

Marcia is just the cleverest person with her fingers, and her trousseau, providing she has time to give it proper attention, should be a thing of beauty as well as a joy to behold.

Mrs. Julian Simpson wears her shingle surprisingly square at the nape of her neck.

Country Romance

MARRIAGES and engagements are all the vogue with the Arthur Bragg family, of Landgrove, Cootamundra. No sooner has the excitement died down over the wedding of the elder daughter, Phyllis, to Dr. Hertford Weedon, of Wagga, than Geoff, the youngest of the three sons, has announced his engagement to June Whitehead, of Goodwood, Minhamite, Victoria.

This leaves only Alan and Lorna in the circle around the fireside. As the stations belonging to the family wander off in different districts, I should think that Alan will be too busy dashing from one to the other for romantic dalliance by the way, but one never knows!

Dull dinner companions are usually allotted to those with a reputation for brightness.

English Visitor

THE Hon. Joan Milne is thoroughly enjoying her stay in Sydney, and no party is complete without her. She has been present at many of the shipboard dances, and wore an exceedingly smart lacquer red evening frock to the opening of the Manhattan Cabaret last Wednesday.

Continuing about the Manhattan, Juliet, it looked very newly-furnished for the occasion, and the Melbourne orchestra under the leadership of Ben Featherstone received quite an ovation at the end of the evening. Queenie Royal and her partner in their dance number wore the most lovely fan-shaped frocks of black shiny satin with puffs and frills of leaf-green at the back.

Unique Rock Garden

KATHLEEN COBROFT is back in Sydney just in time to start off the New Year with a survey of the 365 pockets in her rock garden. Each little bed represents a day of the year, and Kathleen takes the keenest interest in their bright blooms.

With her mother, Mrs. A. J. Cobcroft, Kathleen has been abroad for the best part of a year, and among the many interesting episodes in her itinerary was a visit to Russia. The travellers joined a large party of tourists to Leningrad and were shown the usual places of historic interest. They found Finland, which sounds so very far away and chilly to us, most attractive, and every comfort was obtainable.

Picture for Lady Game

SPECIAL interest is attached to the water-color of the Botanic Gardens by Miss C. Tindale, which was presented to Lady Game as a farewell gift by members of the Cumberland branch of the Country Women's Association. The path bounded by its grey-stoned convict-built wall, running to Farm Cove, which has always been a favorite walk of Lady Game, was the scene chosen for portrayal.

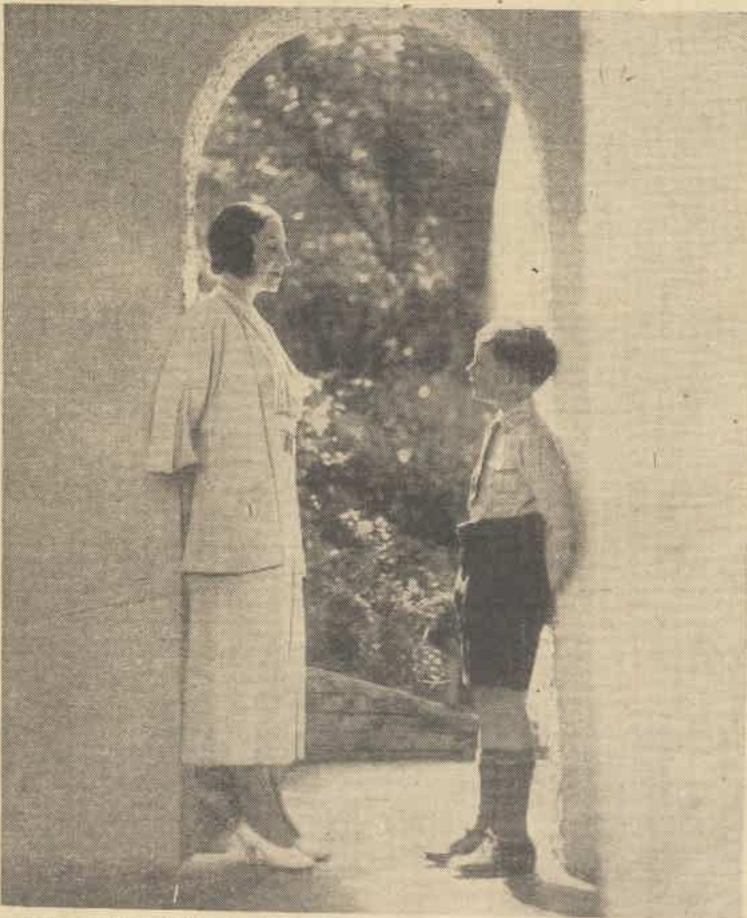
The history of the vicinity was printed on the back, telling of Governor Phillip's landing and his subsequent planting of cereals in oblong beds along the waterfront. The beds, for the matter of that, still retain their original shape.

Soldiers Entertain

VERY popular with the young generation is the old and much-favored Army custom of entertaining children at Christmas time. To a man the soldiers, both commissioned and otherwise, turned out en masse to add cheer to the party given at Victoria Barracks last week.

If Father Christmas acquired a Roman flavor by appearing in a chariot of ancient design, and reindeers were conspicuous by their absence, none were so churlish as to cavil at that. Grotesque figures capered round and about, and a real regimental band added to the delights of the afternoon party. Captain H. N. Boyle was responsible for the ease with which the "wheels went round."

A Christmas-tide engagement of interest is that just announced of Miss Joy Howarth and Mr. John Marks. The prospective bride is well-known by reason of her screen and stage career, and her fiance is the son of the late Dr. Herbert Marks and Mrs. Marks, of Woodside, Bowral.



MRS. CLIFF KITCHEN and her only child, Mickey, in the garden of their home at Wannulla Rd., Point Piper. Mrs. Kitchen is leaving early in the New Year for a trip to Europe.



Professional Party

PROFESSOR and Mrs. C. E. Fawcitt are firm believers in a musical background for their parties. At their recent At Home at the Royal Sydney Golf Club their two hundred guests were regaled with an excellent programme arranged by Maestro Aldrovandi.

The hostess, herself, temporarily left her guests to the care of her daughter, Beatrice, and sang two duets in partnership with Gwladys Evans and Evelyn Lynch.

Dominico Caruso, Mr. Hodgins, and Lorraine Henderson also contributed to the musical items. A buffet supper was arranged in the dining-room, and the wide verandahs were also much in use by the guests.

Tyrolean Suits

PROOF against tears and tobogganing are the leather suits from Vienna recently acquired by Victor and Jim Halloran. Complete in these useful mountaineering outfits, the boys accompanied their mother, Mrs. Garnet Halloran, to Simla, Leura, during the week-end, for their Christmas whoopee.

On their return to town they will make for their new home at Vaucluse, where there will be lots of room for their newly-acquired black kelpie to bark and bite, and generally annoy the neighbors if he feels so disposed.

Lambert-Ryan Wedding

ALL Australia was interested in the wedding arranged to take place at St. Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne, on Christmas Eve, for the bridegroom was dark, picturesque Raymond Lambert, the well-known pianist, and the tall, fair bride Jill Ryan. They intend spending the first few months of married life in touring all the States while he fulfils his professional contract.

White and silver was the chosen color scheme for the wedding, and it was sustained throughout, from the bride's slippers made of the same material as the frock, to the cake with its snow piano complete with silver poinsettias, a tribute to Jill's native State, for her father was the late T. J. Ryan, former Premier of Queensland.

It's a poor digestive system that can't get that Christmas feeling!

Naval Christmas Cheer

ADMIRAL and Mrs. Randle Ford, and Captain Walker, of the Canberra, represented the Navy at the Christmas cocktail party given by Surgeon-Commander and Mrs. Roberts at their home at Vaucluse. The hostess received her guests in a cool-looking frock of carnation pink crepe with a snappy white hat and accessories.

Old Families Foregather

THERE was a great meeting of the clans of the Goulburn district at the wedding of Polly Moriarty, one of the most decorative members of the good-looking Moriarty family, to Charlie Thompson, whose father copes with debits and credits at the Bank of N.S.W., Goulburn. Chisholms, Faithfulls, Gibsons, Milsons, and Maple-Browns were all there to see the pretty ceremony which took place in St. Saviour's Cathedral with Canon Hurst and Rev. H. Hawkins officiating.

Alison Moriarty, and young Pat and Janet Chisholm, cousins of the bride, acted as bridesmaids, and wore charming frocks of daffodil net over satin, with beribboned picture hats in the same shade. The reception was held at Merrila, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Maxwell Chisholm.

Minstrels at Party

AN ideal home is Elaine, Double Bay, for the purpose of entertaining. Last Thursday night Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Fairfax and their son, Vincent, welcomed a number of guests to one of the most successful of the pre-Christmas parties.

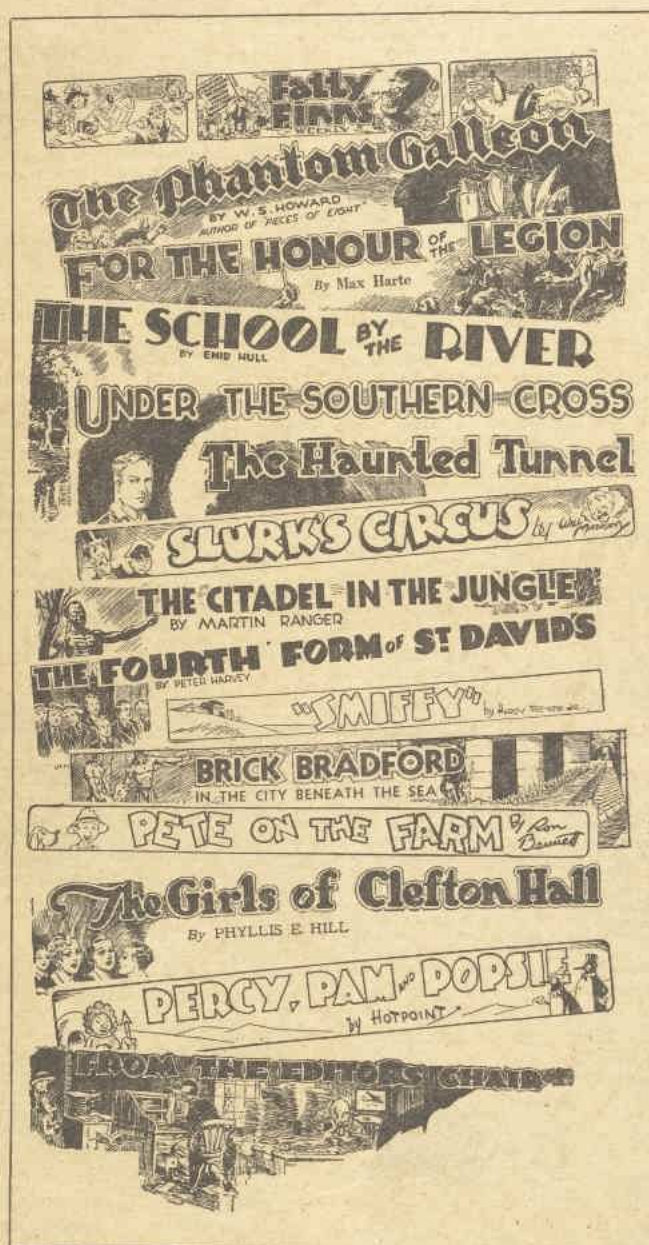
The lovely gardens were gay with colored lights, and strolling musicians wandered up and down singing songs to the accompaniment of stringed instruments in between the playing of the dance orchestra in the ballroom. The guests were mostly youthful, but a sprinkling of naval and consular dignitaries added importance to the occasion.

And have you noticed that—

Dr. and Mrs. W. C. McClelland have now returned to Sydney after witnessing the marriage of their son in Hankow, China? Dr. McClelland, junior, is a member of the Methodist Missionary Society in China.

Jane Lane

More than just a Comic... ...it's a magazine as well!



FATTY FINN'S WEEKLY is full of healthy, happy reading for boys and girls of all ages. School tales, adventure stories, mystery yarns, hobbies, models and competitions for the older children, comics, puzzles, pictures, and other wholesome fun for the smaller folk.

It's Thrilling — It's Interesting — It's Helpful!

16 MONSTER PAGES

STORIES, GAMES, HOBBIES
FOR ALL BOYS and GIRLS
The Biggest Comic in the
World—and the Best!

Here's some of the contents....
and there's much more, of course!

- NEW** thrilling serials—"For the Honour of the Legion" and "The School by the River," and 3 other serials.
- NEW** complete stories of a new series—"The Haunted Tunnel" and several other long complete stories.
- NEW** full-page comic—"Slurk's Circus"..... and five other big comics.

And Whack—o—o—oh!

£20 In Cash Prizes

BOYS		GIRLS	
£5....	1st Prize	£5....	1st Prize
£3....	2nd Prize	£3....	2nd Prize
£2....	3rd Prize	£2....	3rd Prize

All Prizes paid in Cash.

These prizes are to be won in an easy, interesting and helpful competition.

See full details in the—

PARENTS

FATTY FINN'S WEEKLY is the ideal children's magazine, for it combines happy fun and frolic to amuse, with healthy, interesting reading to stimulate the mental growth of children of all ages. It carries a wholesome appeal to all boys and girls, and it costs but two-pence per week.

NEW YEAR NUMBER JUST OUT

Fatty Finn's

Have it delivered regularly with your Women's Weekly

What Women Are Doing

Just Back From Geneva

ALL people interested in Y.W.C.A. work are welcoming Miss Jean Stevenson back from abroad.

Miss Stevenson, who is general secretary of the National Y.W.C.A. of New Zealand, was present at the World Y.W.C.A. Council meeting at Geneva, and she also attended the world's Y.W.C.A. leaders' course, where world social systems were discussed.

Being First Is No Novelty To Her

DR. RUBY DAVY was the first woman in Australia to gain the degree of Doctor of Music, and the first woman in Adelaide to take a degree in any faculty. She was the first person to take composition as a principal subject for her Associateship Diploma; the first woman in South Australia to be awarded Licentiate of Music of Trinity College, London; and the first to be awarded the Fellowship of Trinity College, London, and the hon. Fellowship of the Victoria College of Music, London.

Dr. Ruby Davy
—Dickinson-Moneth.

As you see, Dr. Davy rather specialised in firsts, and she is still going strong. In her spare time she dabbles in practical psychology, literary work, and the composition of verse.

Dr. Davy conducted her own prize-winning anthem, "Welcome to Australia" at a community-singing session in Melbourne last month, and as well as the many broadsheets she made, she had to speak on a variety of subjects at the various parties given in her honor by the Women Graduates' Club and many musical societies.

Born at Salisbury, South Australia, Dr. Davy is one of the foremost music teachers in Australia, and is a composer and a poet as well as an elocutionist of some standing.

Destroying Bogies for Inexperienced Travellers

TRAVELLERS who usually get into trouble are old people, women with children, young girls travelling alone, the blind, the mentally unsound, runaway girls and boys, and immigrants and strangers," says Miss Nest Malcolm, general secretary of the Travellers' Aid Society of Victoria.

Voluntary service has been organised, and eight helpers who are quick in sensing and intelligent in handling the difficulties of travellers and co-operating representatives in country centres can be called upon at a moment's notice.

Travelling 2074 miles alone, a 17-month-old baby journeyed safely from the heart of the sugarcane district of Queensland to Adelaide. The Travellers' Aid passed him on from one city to another.

A seemingly respectable woman from another State had made all arrangements not to return when she came to Victoria to wed a pen friend. Then she found that he was black. The Travellers' Aid was able to get her job back for her and to send her home.

The helpers meet with all kinds of requests to assist in the meeting of travellers not known previously. One man enlisted the services of a helper in meeting his wife whom he had not seen for 25 years.

Rayner Sisters Will Be Home Next Year

JOAN AND BETTY RAYNER, the gifted and enterprising Australians who founded the Theatre of Youth, will be home for a few months next year, with programmes in costume from their varied repertoire of tales, songs and dances.

The Rayners conceived their idea of a theatre portraying folklore from different countries when they were studying theatre work in England.

They returned to Sydney, playing in New York on their way, and after a very successful season took their little company by caravan through the country to Melbourne and Adelaide. Following this three months' tour they reorganised as a two-player show, and for three years have toured thousands of miles through Europe, the British Isles, and Canada by caravan.

Their Australian tour will carry them from Perth to Brisbane, and thence to New Zealand and America.

Busy Christmas for Lady Game

LADY GAME, wife of the Governor of New South Wales, is not likely to forget her last Christmas in Australia. Added to all the seasonal gaieties she has had numbers of farewell receptions arranged in her honor, and has been working for the big party at Government House on January 11 in aid of the Bush Nursing and District Nursing Associations.

The Governor's term of office expires shortly and he is returning to England with his family on January 15.

Students Take Beauty Aids To Lecture-room

DR. VIOLET PLUMMER, one of the women who pioneered in the days when the feminine medical student was a novelty in the man-dominated Universities, and who later on carried on an extensive practice in Adelaide is spending a well-earned holiday in Europe.

It is about six years since she was there, and at that time it took her some time to readjust her ideas of the woman medical student.

In her day women who dared to enter the medical school thought it necessary to look as much like men as possible, and so kept to a uniform coat and skirt and stiff white collar. Hence her surprise when she found European medical students in fluffy clothes, carrying a powder puff and lipstick into lecture rooms.

Still she was sufficiently broad-minded and human to realise it was a step in the right direction and one that would be modified with maturity.

Dr. Plummer began her career not long after Dr. Helen Sexton, who was a contemporary of Henry Handel Richardson, at the Melbourne Presbyterian Ladies' College. Dr. Sexton was regarded as one of the best women surgeons in the country before she retired and went to live in Florence.

Jane Mander Contemplates An Autobiography

BACK in New Zealand after more than twenty years in America and Europe, Jane Mander is contemplating an autobiography. It should be a human document, for Jane can write, and has a long string of novels to her credit.

Her first book, "The Story of a New Zealand River," reflects the pioneer life she knew in the big timber country of New Zealand in her youth. She has been a school teacher, a newspaper editor, a University student, but above all she is a human being with a good mind, and a great zest for living.

John Lane published her first book in the days when the acceptance of an overseas manuscript was not as easy an affair as it has been in post-war days.

Collected More Than £100,000 For Returned Soldiers

TIRELESS in her energies where collecting and organisation are concerned, Mrs. Edgar Robinson is perhaps the most ardent collector of moneys for charitable purposes among the women of Australia. She takes her work very seriously, and not as a sideline of social life.

Mrs. Robinson, to whom many a Queensland Digger owes more than he has any knowledge of, is president of the ladies' auxiliary of the Incapacitated and Wounded Sailors and Soldiers' Association of Queensland. This petite, but tireless, woman leaves no stone unturned to make the utmost of her collection campaign.

Her varied efforts have resulted in the collection of more than £100,000.

Collecting Material for Another Book of Verse

"MARKET MORNING" is the title of the charming book of verse that has already been published by Mrs.

Cecil Roscoe, a distinguished English visitor in our midst. During the time she has been in Australia, Mrs. Roscoe has collected material for a Australian verses which will be included in her next publication.

As subject matter, Mrs. Roscoe prefers the homely things of life, and one of her poems relates to the criss-cross patterns made by clothes hanging on the line.

Mrs. Roscoe has also many literary articles to her credit, and was for some time during the war editor of "Boomerang," the magazine produced by the Harefield Hospital organisation.

To encourage international friendship Mrs. Roscoe has arranged for correspondence between the children of the isolated school at Alice Springs and St. Clement Dane's, situated in the heart of London.



Mrs. Cecil Roscoe

Her Mission Is Collecting Inland Children

TWO Christmases ago, Miss E. M. Ferguson made a trip North as far as Beltana to collect children from the wild inland regions of Australia and to take them back to Adelaide with her for a seaside camp.

This Christmas her trip is to be much further than Beltana. She will go as far as Marce on her quest, and it is possible that she may go as far as Oodnadatta, a distance of 688 miles north of Adelaide, and to which town there is a train only once a fortnight.

Leaving Adelaide on January 4 by train, she will bring back with her from the bush areas 16 girls and eight boys, whose ages range from 10 to 14 years. Many of them have never seen either city or sea before, let alone attended a seaside camp! The Inland Mission, however, is arranging such a holiday for them at Glenelg as a Christmas treat.

Miss Ferguson is mistress of the junior school at the Presbyterian Girls' College, Adelaide, and another mistress of the same school, Miss Jean Short, will return with the children, depositing them at their various home towns. Miss Short went North to collect the young campers last year.

Woman Scientist Is Authority on Orchids

ONE of our foremost authorities on orchid pollination is Mrs. Edith Coleman, who lives quietly at Blackburn, Victoria.

Her remarkable discoveries in this subject are widely discussed among botanists and entomologists overseas, as well as in Australia, and her articles have been quoted in some of the leading scientific journals in Great Britain and America.

Naturalist and botanist, Mrs. Coleman does not consider herself a collector of orchids. However, since she began writing articles for the newspapers 14 years ago, thousands of boxes of orchids have come to her from every State for identification, and these have helped to fill her herbarium. For instance, she has as many as two dozen varieties of the Greenhood.

Mrs. Coleman's displays of Australian orchids at shows of the Field Naturalists' Club have always attracted much attention, and are of great educational value. When she organised a charity display of orchids, tropical plants, aquaria, shells, and aboriginal weapons in 1933, Mrs. Coleman was thoughtful enough to provide large scale drawings that showed how to identify an orchid.

Although orchids are her special study, Mrs. Coleman is an all-round naturalist, and with her daughter, herself a scientist, will spend many weeks in camp studying the wild life of a special district.

She writes about sharks, shells, and spiders, as well as about trees and flowers.



Adding Beauty to the Bill of Fare

QUITE new and very interesting to Australians are the menu cards depicting native wildflowers designed and painted by Miss Mary Correll. Miss Correll has travelled a good deal in the various States gathering specimens of all kinds of wildflowers and painting them on her menu cards.

It is a difficult work to make an artistic picture of some of our more intricate wildflowers and at the same time keep them constructionally and botanically correct, but Miss Correll quite evidently has a flair for this type of work. She has depicted some very rare specimens as well as the bush and hill flowers all Australians know.

Miss Correll is a nurse by profession and has invented several widely-used hospital contrivances which she has patented.

Musical Composition Adapted to Films

JULIA BRAND NIXON (Mrs. F. O. Nixon), is the first Queensland composer to have her work adapted to sound films.

Her pianoforte and orchestrated composition, entitled "Corroboree," has been synchronised with the story of a film of the same name which has been made by Robert Fearn Steele.

Mrs. Nixon has a large number of pianoforte solos and some songs to her credit, most of which are distinctive in their originality. Her published work includes "Inspiration," by Palling, Sydney; "Butterfly Dance," and "Baron Waters," by Paxton and Co. (London); "Highday" and "Evening Hymn," by Allan and Co. (Melbourne).

Four of these pieces have been selected for test numbers at various musical competitions throughout Australia.

In addition to her success as a composer, Mrs. Nixon is a skilled pianist and violinist.

Interested in a New Side of Ballet Work

BACK in her native Melbourne for a few months' holiday, Miss Clair Aytoun has not had much spare time, for she has been busy coaching dancing teachers and pupils so that they might be ready to face those members of the Russian ballet who are qualified to examine.

Miss Aytoun is a licentiate of the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing, Cecchetti Branch, and a member of the Association of Revived Greek Dancing.

She has spent the past four years in strenuous study under Margaret Craske, and when she returns to London early in the new year she will face another year of advanced work.

A daughter of a journalist well known in Victoria and W.A., Mr. George Aytoun, who was one of the founders of the Australian Journalists' Association, Miss Aytoun took up three other professions before turning to dancing, and not one of the things they taught her has been wasted.

After she left school she began kindergarten work, then she took up physical training and later massage.

With all these things behind her, she is naturally interested in the remedial powers of ballet training, and she believes that the time will come when it will be widely used to correct defects of the body.



Mrs. F. O. Nixon

IN and OUT of SOCIETY --- By WEP.



AS IF He CARED

Continued
from Page 5

"Oh, I think I must always have known it. At any rate, I should have known it, if you didn't." Her eyes were on the elevator shaft where a bar of sunlight fell. It looked bright in the cold hall. "I can't think why I should have thought you would love me," she said. "After Thelma. It would be so odd for anyone who ever had Thelma love him to care anything about the sort of person that I am."

You could tell that she was in earnest. You could tell that it seemed like that to her, who was always amenable to a reasonable argument. Julian Matrik nodded and went on looking at her as if this was the first time he had ever really seen her.

"What sort of person are you?" he said. "It appears that I don't know." "Not that it matters," she said, "but I'm everything that Thelma isn't. She's white-hot and marvellous and she blazes through the world like a jewel. You loved her when you married her, and then you got tired of her brilliance and her success and of the way the critics rave about her. I can see how that would be; how tired you would get of going into a restaurant behind her and of having your wife's beauty attract attention as if you were beating tom-toms. And Thelma thought her success—her career—was the really important thing in her life. So you were divorced. And then you met me and it seemed to you that that's what you ought to do—marry a little wren, and lead a standardised life."

SHE was standing straight, with her arms down at her sides and her bright head held high. She was in her striped indoor uniform to-day because she had been out on that ambulance case and had not got into her serge suit. And her white cap on her very small head looked proud and uncatchable. But Julian Matrik leaned against the shaft, drumming the fingers of one hand against the bronze grille.

"Life with Thelma was not exactly standardised," was all he would admit. He stared at her face, which was white and hard and sad.

"Well, it would be with me," said Carol. "I'm not dazzling," she said. "I'm not insouciant." She looked at her serviceable uniform, at the hall's white-enamelled woodwork and the pebble-colored walls. "I belong here in this hospital," she said. "It's the first place I've ever really belonged."

She had loathed it when she first arrived, this hospital, but now she loved it. It was work—and work was good. It made the ease and luxury of life before the crash seem unreal and fantastic. Her father would have understood it if he had lived, because her father had always understood everything.

"The kind of girl that is at home here," said Carol, "is not the sort for the great Julian Matrik to marry. I know that, and you know it."

"You may know it," said Julian Matrik. "That does not mean that I know it. I may or may not know it."

"You know it," said Carol. She pressed the elevator button. She heard the machinery begin to whirl.

"I must go now," said Carol, but she couldn't think what for. There seemed not to be much use going or staying. The elevator door opened before her.

"Good-bye," said Carol, stepping through it and staring hard—staring being one way of keeping your eyes from filling with tears. But Julian Matrik did not move and the elevator man stood waiting with his hand on the control.

"Will you let me give you dinner to-night?" he said. "This seems a little abrupt and there are things I don't understand." He looked at her, standing before him like a gardenia—like a gardenia even paler than usual and trying not to wilt.

really, since elevator boys don't count. The higher you went the deeper you got into the hospital, the farther from Park Avenue. . . . Presently you were all alone on the top floor of Slade, like being alone on the top of a great anti-septic mountain. You were alone in your own room, where there was nothing to do but be calm if you could. Alone in your own room at Slade, which, after all, was as near to nothingness as you could get. Carol sat still and dry-eyed and looked at her hands folded on her starched lap. Perhaps after a while you got used to nothingness.

But apparently what she had to get used to was seeing Julian Matrik around the hospital. For when she started out the next morning his car was standing near the out-patient gate—the open car that he drove himself.

"I wanted to talk to you," he said, getting out of the car, "and I thought I could drive you wherever you are going."

"I'd rather walk," said Carol. "Thanks."

SHE couldn't think of anything more to say to him. That was all there was to say. She was conscious only that he was still the same glamorous figure whom her cousin Thelma, three years before had married. That had been the most talked-of match of the season—the famous society beauty and actress, Thelma Elton, and the young financial genius, Julian Matrik. The world had supposed that a match like that between two such wilful and colorful persons would not last, and the world had been right. It hadn't. But what the world ought to have known, if it didn't, was that they would probably go on loving each other. Which they had, according to Thelma.

Thelma had seen Carol and Julian at a restaurant the night before Carol's spring vacation ended, and the next day she had called Carol and asked her

"Oh, I wanted you to be the first to know it, Carol, the wonderful news, my darling! I knew I had seen it in Julian's face when he looked at me Wednesday night. Yes, of course I did. You see I've got a great fault—yes, I have, though no one would suspect it, but I have an inferiority complex, and I thought Julian had really, in that silly quarrel of ours, got over caring for me. But now I know how stupid I was—and oh, how happy I am!—he still cares for me. I am to see him to-night."

And Carol, standing holding the telephone where she had casually picked it up, suddenly sat down on the nearest chair. She did not have the strength to keep herself erect. Because this thing was not possible. It could not happen. She had not told anyone but Mrs. Stokel and Mr. Ogilvie that she was to marry Julian Matrik, because for a little while she wanted to hold that happiness looked in her breast.

She tried to think. But her brain, as Thelma continued to talk, made only a mechanical movement, back and forth along the facts set out for its inspection:

"Thelma still loves Julian, Julian still loves Thelma!" There went her brain back and— "How could anyone care for me if Thelma wanted him?"—there it went forward; Julian could not bear to tell her, Carol, how it was with him, of course. No man could. Some ancient virtue like honor or civility would be involved there. And Thelma was telling her, because it did not seem possible to that melodramatic inhabitant of another world that Julian could have been interested in the slightest degree in her little quaint cousin. He had gone to Carol on the rebound, to please Thelma.

AND Thelma went into that—Carol vaguely heard her words. She knew, she said, that Carol was a little fascinated by

the gun touching the little wings of yellow hair that showed under her hat, and with an air of retreating cautiously backwards as though from a wolf.

Phil Howes did not seem to see Julian Matrik. He ignored him as if he were hysteria.

"I was just thinking of you," he said to Carol, leaning out and down. "I'm taking supplies down to the River Street Station. Want a lift?"

"That will be lovely," she said, almost inaudibly. "My first call is down there."

Phil Howes saw clearly enough that something was wrong. He had seen from the first that something would be wrong. The legends that had accumulated around Julian Matrik were somewhat confusing, but all were those of domination and force. And that was what Carol did not need, it seemed to Phil Howes. Matrik was one of those unquenchable men who are peculiar to Park Avenue and to Wall Street, or so it seemed to Dr. Howes. Carol was far, far too good for him.

HE jumped out of the ambulance. In the sunlight his hair glowed almost like Carol's. He was long-limbed and fair and boyish, and usually he was whistling. But he did not whistle now. Instead he went over to Carol and threw his arm around her shoulders. He had known her since childhood and perhaps that was all right. But somehow you felt that this had nothing to do with childhood.

"What case is it?" asked Phil Howes.

"Carol's case," she said. "She's eating spaghetti and she gets out of bed and she defies every law of medical practice. Rosa does," said Phil Howes. "I'll go with you to see Rosa. Come along."

"All right," said Carol. She did not look at Julian Matrik. Neither did Phil Howes. You would not have known Matrik was there. Here were two persons engaged in the same profession, thoroughly understanding each other, and one of them, at least, terribly in love.

"You look pale, Carol," said Phil



Do You Know. . .

THAT the picturesque Dutch windmills are slowly disappearing from Holland. According to a report from an official mill association in that country more than 45 per cent. have been removed or demolished since 1923, the number now being about 1626.

BUT she was not past him, for suddenly his arms closed around her. "You little fool," he said. "You little fool, don't you know that I love you?"

But Carol was limp in his arms, her eyes evaded his. "Don't bother," she said quite simply. "It isn't necessary to lie to me."

"Lie!" he said and his arms hurt her. "You told me that you loved me and yet you allow that medical infant to kiss you. He can take you off in the ambulance any time he likes, can he?"

"Yes," said Carol, "yes, he can. He's honest, he's decent, he loves me!" She twisted in his arms. She could not free herself but her sudden savage vehemence startled him. Unblinking, unbelieving, he stared down into her face in which the blue eyes flashed back at him through eyelashes suddenly like arrows.

"At least, he loves me," she said, her eyes blazing. "And all you want is to have me love you while you love Thelma—oh, I can't bear you!"

"Oh, you can't!" and suddenly Matrik, who had been merely grim, became himself enraged. He bent his head; he kissed her until she gasped, until she looked as though she would faint. He shouted: "So you can't bear me!" That tearing, bitter knowledge seemed to dig a gap in his reserve, his silence. He couldn't let her go, he couldn't let her go! He never wanted to do anything but hold her in his arms, the little slender thing. He knew enough about love to know he had never loved before.

He held her more tightly to him. She sobbed: "You're a beastly person. Let me go! I hate you!"

"Carol, listen—"

"Let me go—I hate you."

He let her go suddenly. All softness fled from his eyes. Then he was out of the hallway, into the sunlight, and his car was gone. The street resumed its look of ugly poverty.

Carol telephoned to Mrs. Stokel in the afternoon. "I may be late this evening," she said. "All the cases seem to be breaking at once. Dr. Alkerton is at the Metcalf case and Dr. Flynn is here with me at the Rosenborns. We'll keep in touch."

Phil Howes came down to Mrs. Stokel at eight that evening. "I can't get Carol," he said. "She isn't in her room and there's no report at the switchboard. Have you seen her?"

"No," said Mrs. Stokel briefly. "I haven't seen her."

Mr. Ogilvie hadn't gone off duty. "It's funny about Carol," he had been saying ever since seven o'clock. "I don't see why she doesn't phone Dr. Flynn and Alkerton came back long ago."

"Yes, it's funny," said Mrs. Stokel. "They shouldn't let girls out like that at night," burst out Mr. Ogilvie. "The hospital shouldn't expect them to do it. There's no telling what may have happened to Carol. . . . He moved around his cage in terrible protest. "That's right!"

Dr. Howes listened to him. He trailed restlessly across the hall to the doorway and back again. "Let me see a list of her calls to-day," he said. Mrs. Stokel produced the list. "I'll go to each of these places," said Phil Howes, white-faced. "I'll call up if there's any news or to see if you have any."

Mrs. Stokel watched him thoughtfully as he tore through the door. The door had hardly stopped whirling for him before it whirled again for Julian Matrik and a beautiful girl in a white velvet coat. "I want to see Carol," he said.



"SEASON'S GREETINGS." A typical Christmas morning scene throughout the world. This lass must be receiving an extra special message, and who is it from?

to lunch. It was so marvellous, she had said, to see Julian again, and the minute she had, she had known he was the only man for her, that there was no such thing as divorce, that she could see from Julian's face that he still cared for her. Thelma. And Carol must tell her all about him: how he had been this last year, and what he had said, and why he hadn't, just everything the way most of the men one knew had, and how Carol had met him—and wasn't it odd of him to look her up and take her out? . . . But that was Julian's way—and Carol, knowing that Julian had loved her, had gone on sipping her tea and had refused to feel afraid in any way.

But all the time she was afraid. All the time she had known that if Thelma wanted a man back she could get him back. For that was the way Thelma had always been. Even when Carol was fourteen and Thelma a little under seventeen, she had always known that all Thelma had to do to deprive her of the company of anyone she was playing tennis or golf or riding with was to come along, throw him one violet glance, and make him her willing slave.

No one but Carol knew that under that violet softness was a deathless determination. They did not look like flowers to Carol, those eyes, but like amethysts, hard and beautiful and shining. But whatever they looked like, men loved them and fell under their spell.

You wouldn't think that Julian Matrik could be brought back by them once he had freed himself. You wouldn't think that anything could hold him, that he went where he wanted. But back to Thelma was where he wanted to go—that was what Carol had discovered in the next few days. For Thelma had called her up one evening and had said:

Julian—everyone was. But she would get over it quickly, and certainly Julian was not the man for a blessed angel like Carol. Why, he was like a white-hot acetylene torch, he would eat her up in no time. She, Thelma, had learned, at last, to cope with him, but Carol could never do so.

Carol had held the telephone while that voice, that beautiful sticky voice like the sound of a bumble bee, had gone on and on. On and on saying, He cares for me—of course he is not the man for you, my darling."

Finally the voice had ceased, and she had written to Julian Matrik to tell him that she had changed her mind, that she had found she belonged in the hospital, and she hoped he would let it rest at that. But he hadn't let it rest at that. He had to go through all the obvious, the silly, meaningless motions of protest.

So here he was now, wanting to talk.

"Talk!" said Carol fiercely, at bay. "What is there to talk about? Nothing! You don't need me, you don't want me, I mean nothing to you."

Matrik said, "I don't want you? I don't love you? He had slumped from his car while she was speaking and now stood leaning his weight on his hand, which was clenched against the door.

"I think you don't even know what love is," said Carol.

"I see," said Julian Matrik, staring at her.

The sunlight fell on them both. The lovely April sunlight. Then she said quite calmly, "I am on duty. I really must go."

Howes. "I think I'll give you a beating. What have you been doing with yourself?" And then, with his youth and his indolent charm, he leaned down and kissed her. "I think I'll have to marry you," he said, "and give you a good home!"

"That would be lovely," said Carol. And she saw that he was wiser than she was. He was helping her. Some intuition had told him to help her. Her eyes misted with affection, with gratitude. "Darling Phil," she said.

"Let's go!" said Dr. Howes. He half lifted Carol, bag and all, into the ambulance, and they clanged off.

When Carol came down the stairs after looking at Rosa, the big open car was parked in the sunlight before the doorway and Julian Matrik was standing in the dim hallway.

"This," said Carol, "is getting to be a habit with you."

"I want to know what Thelma had to say the other day," said Julian Matrik.

She stood in the dimness, white like a statue. "She didn't say anything very important."

"I see." He looked at her pleasantly. "They told me in the Bag Room that you had from twelve to one off duty for luncheon. I thought we'd have lunch, you and I, with Thelma." His eyes watched her in the shadows. "I think there are things that must be straightened out."

"I can't have lunch with you to-day," said Carol. "Thelma would die if she came into this part of town, even for an hour."

"Carol," he said, "why are you afraid of Thelma? Why won't you see her? Why are you afraid of me?" "I'm not afraid of you," said Carol. "I'm just finished with you." And then she slipped past him and started for the street.

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THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY HOME MAKER

December 29, 1934.

A special section devoted to the interests of home-lovers.

27

For Thorough Enjoyment of Summertime Meals

... Use that Verandah!

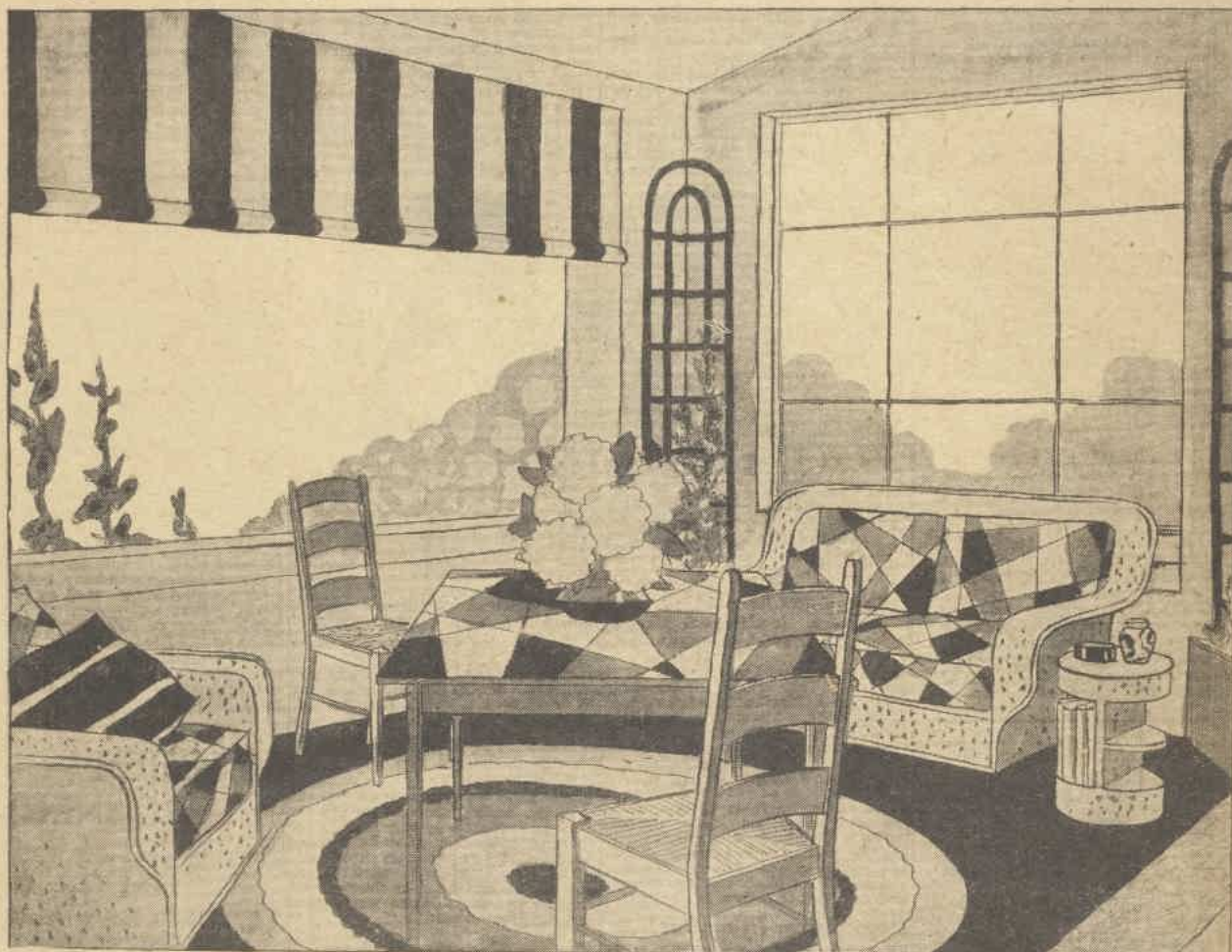
Or plan a colorful sunroom where even grey days will become gay days

By OUR HOME DECORATOR

To-day, with light, attractive furniture so varied in design, so much more reasonable in price, it becomes a simple matter to make the verandah as charming and comfortable as any other room in the house. In fact, even more so!

Once you have decided to use it for meals, you'll find that cheerful afternoon teas, bridge parties and suppers follow, and seem ever so much more inviting in the open air.

MANY of our bungalows have semi-enclosed verandahs or porches such as you see illustrated here.



And with gay, vivid, striped awnings in colors to harmonise with the brick, stucco, or wood of the walls, they bring to life the simplest little home—give to it a picturesque air in addition to defeating the sun and glare.

There are, of course, countless ways of furnishing this verandah in order to make an admirable setting for open-air dining and living.

A lounge or divan of some sort is indispensable. I think the tired housewife and the business-girl or man would be tempted more often to rest a while under such conditions.

One can buy the loveliest of upholstered wicker furniture, but if funds do not permit of the luxurious-looking suites, why not invest in one or two of the chairs, and cover an ordinary spring-mattress, similar to the one shown in the picture?

Wicker furniture is so adaptable that one could devise endless color schemes into which one may fit one's favorite cretonnes or chintzes. When buying, however, disregard the flimsy, tawdry sort of wicker, which menaces the unwary in some quarters, and select that suggesting strength and comfort and freedom from meaningless ornament and lines, and it will stand the hard usage it frequently gets. With a fresh coat of paint, lacquer, or stain, every other season, it may last indefinitely.

Your floor may be tiled, or of brick or wood, but, covered with fibre rugs, it should be sufficiently furnished in that direction. A runner of coconut matting is good. It prevents any chance of chill, and it is so simple to keep clean from any dust that filters through, leaving only the flooring to be swept.

ONE of the smartest and most original pieces of furniture I have yet seen in a modern sunroom is a round table having miniature "swing out and in" circular shelves attached to each leg of the table. These prove ever so handy to hold the empty teacup, glass, book, or magazine,

besides keeping the top of the table free from such odds and ends.

By the way, since the open verandah is no place for pictures, because of wind, painted tiles can take their place and lend a quaint touch. They may carry a simple floral motif and are glued to the wall.

Table linen should be gaily colored, and can be made so that it will not blow about with every breeze.

An enterprising friend of mine sews little pockets into the inside four corners of her cloths. Each pocket is weighted, and these keep the cloth neatly in position on the breezeiest of days.

She also has invested in some of the unbreakable ware, which is not at all expensive, and can be purchased in a variety of delightful colors and mottled effects, which match too, the mottled tonings on her wicker furniture.

This unbreakable tableware does service for garden meals she is so fond of serving when the weather permits, and also for picnics.

The light white wood chairs you can buy from any of the furniture stores, lacquered to match the main color used in your gay scheme, are necessary if you adopt the healthful habit of using that verandah for dining. The table, of course, must be painted or lacquered the same color. And do not overlook the immense help which comes from gay cushions in sun-fast and wash-fast fabrics.

For All the Year

IT'S simple enough in summer with all the joy of out-of-doors looking in. But one is even more fully rewarded by planning a restful, cheery spot of this sort for the autumn and greyer days of winter.

And this is where glass comes into its own. One can have those "drop" windows put in to-day almost as cheaply as the sliding type.

And then, rain or shine, the sunroom can be just as gay in winter as the open-air sunporch of midsummer.

I would like to see it a place full of growing things in gay colored jars or window-boxes, with a group of arm-chairs in which one may be picturesquely at ease.

Just Suggestions

NOT long ago, I was a guest in a home where breakfast was served in the sunroom. The space between each window was carefully latticed. This, painted a vivid orange, made a pleasant background for the growing vines planted in tubs at regular intervals. The tiled floor was green and the breakfast table was painted grey-green with orange lines of decoration. Simple, ladder-back chairs, rush-seated, were painted the same color.

Another sunroom I have in mind has brick walls painted a greeny-blue. The floor is paved with wide, dull red tiles, and low, comfortable chairs and settees are grouped around.

This furniture is painted black and mauve. Rose and black glazed chintz is used for deep, luxurious cushions and window draperies.

Blue-green painted tubs and stone-jars hold masses of colorful hydrangeas.

Pleanty of books and magazines complete this room which is a centre of attraction to which all instinctively gravitate.—E.E.G.

MORE HEALTHY MEALS if you use that verandah! Remember outdoor breakfast in summer is the best cure for nerves and early morning moodiness. The porch or verandah can be as gay and colorful as you like, and it can be furnished attractively at little cost. Notice in this picture the latticed archways over which delicate creepers are making headway.

CLEVER IDEAS

TO PRESERVE cheese in hot weather cut the block into long strips and put in a glass jar, screwing the lid on tightly. It will keep fresh until the last piece is used. It also keeps well in the ice-chest this way without harming other food.—C. Egan, Kingsley St., Byron Bay, N.S.W.

TO RE-WATERPROOF prem and motor hoods, mix sufficient lamp-black with linseed oil to make it like ink. Paint over hoods which have been wiped over with turpentine and allowed to dry. The result is a glossy black waterproof finish.—Mrs. J. Eckhardt, 86 Gladstone St., Kew, E.4, Vic.

TO GIVE a damask tablecloth longer life, run a hem along the selvedge at one side when it is half worn out. The creases will then come in a different place and the cloth will not wear out nearly so soon.—Mrs. E. Monro, Lawn Hill, Burketown, N.Q.

DO NOT discard your finished electric light globe. Just hold it under a running water-lap for three or four minutes, wipe it thoroughly, and it will light up again.—Mrs. A. Gawthorne, Fendower, The Avenue, Lawson, N.S.W.

TO SAVE the ice in summer, make a sling of two or three thicknesses of butter muslin, fasten it in the ice box with small tacks, and place the block of ice in it, seeing that it does not touch anywhere, but is suspended in the sling. The ice will last twice as long as when resting on the chest bottom.—Mrs. B. Braidwood, Post Office, Woy Woy, N.S.W.

SCREW INTO a coat-hanger eight cup-hooks, and keep this handy when undressing baby. You will be surprised how useful you will find this for putting baby's clothes on and in keeping them nice and fresh.—Mrs. W. E. Sinecock, Shirley Avenue, Kilkenny, N.S.A.

THOSE TROUBLED by mosquito bites may be glad to learn that a styptic pencil, procurable at all chemists for 6d., gives great relief.—Miss Winifred Gerrard, Box 34, P.O., Coonamble, N.S.W.

TO PREVENT mould on pickles put in a small piece of horseradish when making them. This also makes them taste much better.—Mrs. J. Pritchard, 23 Hopkins St., W. Richmond, E.1, Melbourne.

CABINS ON overseas liners are usually small, and one does not like shutting out the fresh air. Each night soak a large bath-towel in salt water and fix it across the door with drawing-pins. With the breeze down the corridor, the cabin will keep cool in the warmest weather.—R. Shepard, 2 Duke St., North Kensington, S.A.

SAVE SCRAPS of toilet soap, place them in a vessel, cover with boiling water, and stir in a small quantity of camphor, dissolved in sweet oil. When nearly cold, run the soap into a mould and make into various shapes. This soap is excellent for the seaside during the surfing season.—Miss G. Willmot, Dalvein, Qld.

A TRUE STORY

By A MAN

who suffered from haemorrhoids for years until he made this discovery

"FOR YEARS I had suffered with the unending agony of haemorrhoids, buying all kinds of salves, pills and ointment. Two physicians had advised a surgical operation, but partly in fear and partly due to the cost I continued on as before.

"One day, in discouragement, I purchased a bottle of Nujol. I began taking a tablespoonful each night at bedtime and I was grateful a few days later to experience a restfulness and peace I had not known for a long time. I continued without interruption taking one tablespoonful each night. What a change it made in me. In six months' time I felt strong, and while I don't mean to say any magic was employed, I have had no suggestion of pain or disturbance since. It has been past two years, now, and I discontinued the treatment, but I know positively that it was Nujol that did the work.

"This letter is sent you with the hope some other suffering human may learn of the good Nujol will do in similar circumstances."

Nujol can now be obtained in a flavoured form—Cream of Nujol. Cream of Nujol has a delicious taste and your children are sure to like it. Grown-ups also enjoy its palatable flavour. Cream of Nujol contains no cathartic drugs and its beneficial action is entirely due to the Nujol content. Both Nujol and Cream of Nujol are obtainable at all chemists.



GROWING UP STURDY AND STRONG

Appetite is health's greatest ally. . . . and the strong man of to-morrow is the boy of to-day with the healthy, hearty appetite for his meals. Make your dinners doubly nourishing and tasty with a spoonful of GRAVOX, which



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KIDDIES love competitions. The new Fatty Finn's Weekly is offering splendid prizes for boys and girls. Buy it for your youngster.

Auricula is an Ideal City-Dweller

It Thrives in Smoky Places where Other Flowers Wilt

... Says the OLD GARDENER

THE auricula, little-known and rare, deserves better treatment. It is a beautiful little flower, grows about six inches in length, in gorgeous sunshine colors, and is really very accommodating. For it can be grown inside and outside the house, potted, or in garden beds. So the Old Gardener tells you in this article how to cultivate it.

WELL, Christmas is over, and now we are looking forward to the New Year.

I see your garden is looking well. You know, even in the busiest times one can usually find a spare moment to put one's garden in order, and have a few flowers to make the place look like home.

And what staunch friends gardening can make for one!—the exchanging of

smoke, and grime of a city does not mar its progress. So, city dwellers in flats and cramped areas, get your window-boxes, pots, tins, etc., to work.

Just a little charcoal, rubble or anything suitable forms the bottom drainage. Then put in a layer of cow manure or old leaves, grass, or straw, to prevent the soil from mixing with the material for drainage. Now put in some good, rich leaf mould, mix with soil, water the



THE AURICULA makes a lovely pot plant and a delightful window-sill decoration. In this article you will learn how to grow it from seeds or from offsets which are thrown up from the main stem of a matured plant.

plants, cuttings, and advice given to one another all help to bind the friendship more closely. Practical knowledge gained is passed on. There is nothing that gives me, personally, greater pleasure than to be able to pass on any advice that will help gardening enthusiasts.

Well, now, I want to tell you about a flower which we do not hear very much about, and which is very rarely seen in the many gardens around—the auricula. This is a very beautiful and fascinating flower, and can be grown to perfection outside as well as inside. It makes a beautiful pot plant, easy to cultivate, and very little attention is required.

Grow Them In or Out!

If grown out of doors, select a semi-shaded position away from hot westerly winds. It is not absolutely necessary to have pure, sweet, untainted air. I have seen them growing in the heat of the city, where very often other plants fail. I came across one some time ago, growing in an old corner where one would think no plant could grow. Yet it was a beautiful, healthy plant, so the dust,

young plants when necessary, and you will have a display that will be admired by everyone—and what beautiful cut flowers they are!

THERE are two distinct types of auriculas, the show or florist variety, and the Alpine.

The florist variety is more delicate than the Alpine, but, still, do not let that alarm you, for by selection of good sheltered spots, that difficulty can be overcome, as I have already explained.

The Alpine variety is more hardy, and can be grown out in the open in rockeries or various corners where color and charm are needed.

How to Propagate Them

THEY are increased in two ways—by sowing seed and by taking offsets which are thrown up from the main stem. Some varieties throw up more offshoots than others, the Alpine ones especially.

Take off these shoots, press them firmly in the soil, either in boxes or

IN the quest for suitable New Year gifts which will be appreciated and, hardly likely to be duplicated, why not consider house plants? Choose them from your collection, or from the florists, wrap the pots in festive paper and tie with bright ribbons.

There is something about plants that is very much more intimate than the ordinary gift. The daily care they receive, though but slight, is a constant reminder of the donor throughout the year. And is not that the underlying purpose of our gifts?

seed beds—seed frames are the ideal plan. Hessian coverings can then be placed over them until they have struck. When they have taken root, pot them up into small pots or jam tins with specially-prepared soil with a layer of sand on the top.

Sowing the seed is very interesting, as new varieties are often secured. The seed should be sown immediately it is gathered to ensure good germination. Old seed loses its vitality.

A good plan for the small grower is to sow the seed in a pot, stand the pot in a pan or saucer filled with water, place a piece of glass over the pot, and in a very short time the plants will be showing.

Remove the glass gradually to harden them off. Good, strong seedlings will flower in fourteen months. The auricula does exceptionally well in pots, seeming to enjoy confined spaces. So don't report them too often.

Yes, they flower prolifically, and have many beautiful colors. They are white, cream, golden, and a very handsome yellow. There are also some very fine double varieties well worth a try.

Well, I must be off. See you again soon, and I take this opportunity of wishing all my gardening friends a Happy New Year.

KITCHEN CLEANERS

Their Origin...

And Their Uses

WASHING soda is excellent for dissolving grease and dirt. Use it on greasy kitchen utensils—with the exception of aluminium, as soda stains such. Dissolve it in boiling water, and clean your sinks and drains with it.

Soap, which is a compound of oil or fat with some alkali, such as soda, also dissolves grease and dirt, and is, of course, used in all branches of household work as a grease and dirt solvent.

Turpentine, which is obtainable from pine trees, is used in the manufacture of paints and varnishes, and in the home is used for making various polishes and for removing paint stains.

Kerosene and paraffin, obtainable from shale, are excellent for removing rust, for washing very dirty clothes, for mixing with whiting to clean porcelainware, such as baths and sinks. Also use it to wash dusters, mops and dirty linoleum.

HOUSEWORK Made Easier

Convenient Gas Copper

CLOTHES washing has always been one of the most arduous duties in the home, and washing day has become proverbially an occasion of hard work and fatigue. The use of a gas copper in place of the old-time wood or coal boiler is a substantial aid towards lightening the burden.

The gas copper requires no attention except by way of turning down the flame as soon as the copper comes to the boil.

This is an economy well worth practising, as quite a small jet of gas is sufficient to keep the clothes at boiling point once that temperature is reached. The gas copper has the additional advantage that it does not scatter black specks of soot through the air as is the case with the old-style, solid fuel fire, and even more so with the rubbish fire which in some homes is still a feature of washing day.



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STEELO

WORKED ONLY ONE WEEK IN TWO

Sciatica Kept Him At Home

It is the wife who sends us this information about her husband's troubles. "She writes:—'For some time past, my husband has been able to work only one week in two, on account of sciatica. He suffered so much from it that he could scarcely move for the pain. We tried many things, but without result. Then we decided to give Kruschen Salts a trial. For twelve months past, my husband has been taking his 'little dose' of Kruschen every morning. Now, he has no more trouble with the sciatica, and is working regularly.'—(Mrs.) M. Doctors estimate that one-half of civilised humanity suffers from partial constipation. This condition results in an unsuspected residue of waste matter, which poisons the blood and produces sciatica, as well as many of the mystery aches and pains from which people suffer. Kruschen keeps the organs of elimination in perfect trim, so that every particle of poisonous waste material is expelled gently, regularly and completely.

WHY DO DISCRIMINATING PEOPLE ALWAYS BUY THE BEST? Because they know that what is cheap in price is cheap in worth.

ARTERIAL TABLETS FOR HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE.

are a little higher in price than other remedies for High Blood Pressure, but the results after a two-months' course more than repay the extra outlay. Mrs. Fay, Richmond, says:—'I can find no words sufficient to praise ARTERIAL TABLETS. My husband was incapacitated for months, in fact, he had a slight stroke. He would find nothing to give him relief. After taking Arterial Tablets he gradually commenced to improve, and to-day he is back at business, etc., etc.'"

If you suffer from Pains in the Head, Irritability, Lack of Energy, Unsteadiness in Walking, Palpitation, Loss of Hearing, Hot Flashes, Exhaustion, Failing Memory—that is BLOOD PRESSURE!

Be on the safe side with the safest remedy, DR. NEUBAUER'S ARTERIAL TABLETS. Price for five weeks, 12/6; ten weeks, 22/6; trial supply, 5/6.

Obtainable at all leading Chemists, or direct from

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WEE MODERNS—with a Luxury Home of their Own

Four little children who have a twelve-roomed suite and five indoor servants to themselves!

By Air Mail.

From MURIEL SEGAL, Our Special Representative in Europe

The Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, in deciding to take up residence in the historic Blenheim Palace, have allotted a special suite to their four children—the Earl of Sunderland, aged seven, Lady Sarah Spencer Churchill, aged twelve, Lady Caroline, aged ten, and Lady Rosemary, aged four.

THE children will have their own dining-room, their own sitting-room, and their own bedrooms. They will also have a playroom and a schoolroom. Their "staff" will include a head nurse, an under-nurse, and a nursery-maid, a governess and a footman. The footman will serve their meals, valet their clothes, and look after their toys. They will also have their own grooms who will care for their special horses and dogs.

Blenheim Palace has not for some years been used as a residence, and it is over a quarter of a century since children roamed the 3000 acres of beautiful

parkland with its huge lake on the outskirts of Oxford.

The old family retainers, who have been forty years and more in service at the palace, are overjoyed, naturally, at the prospect of children's laughter resounding through Blenheim.

The Duchess of Marlborough, widow of the last duke, made the breeding of the famous Blenheim spaniels her main hobby, so that dogs have always been a feature of Blenheim Palace. Two huge bedrooms and a drawing-room have been used for housing 30 dogs, and, therefore, special workmen have been sent from London to disinfect and paint these rooms for human habitation.

SCONES, PIKELETS & LIGHT Tasty CAKES

These are Quite Easy to Make and so Suitable for Summer!

ALL recipes published on this page have been tested in our own kitchens by the cooking expert of The Australian Women's Weekly. Photographs by our own photographer.

By Our
COOKING
EXPERT

SUMMER holidays always place a specially heavy demand on the cake supply. This is the time when the family chef is always casting around for recipes for light, nourishing cakes to keep up the supply for picnickers and pantry-raiders, as well as for the usual family demands.

Therefore, this week, I have made a selection of recipes which will, I feel sure, appeal to all who are doing holiday cooking.

MANY of them are tried and trusted favorites, but isn't it wonderful how one loses recipes for old favorites? You think you'll never forget how to make scones or pikelets or sponge rolls, so you don't enter them up in your recipe book—and just at the critical moment your memory fails you.

So, this week, I have specialised chiefly in cakes suitable for summer holiday time, with recipes for scones and pikelets which I especially like myself, and hope you'll try.

SCONES

Half a lb. self-raising flour, 1 teaspoon salt, large teaspoon butter, 11 gills milk.

Sift the flour and salt. Rub in the butter lightly. Add the milk nearly all at once, making into a soft dough. Turn onto a floured board and knead till smooth. Roll out, stamp into rounds with a plain cutter. Place on a greased or floured tin. Glaze with egg or milk. Place in hot oven. Turn gas three-quarters pressure, then when brown, turn gas low. Bake from 10 to 12 minutes. Turn onto a sieve to cool. Split with the fingers, and butter.

PIKELETS

Two cups plain flour, 2 teaspoons cream of tartar, 1 teaspoon carb. soda, 1 cup sugar, 1 cup milk, 1 egg. Sift the flour, cream of tartar and carb. soda into a basin, add the sugar and make a well in the centre. Add the well-beaten egg and milk gradually, allowing the flour to fall in gradually, making into a smooth batter. Have ready a greased heated frying-pan and drop the mixture in, in spoonfuls. Turn when browned. Turn on to a clean cloth. Serve spread with butter.

COLORS FRUIT CAKE

Six ounces butter, 6oz. sugar, 3 eggs, 1 tablespoon milk, 1 teaspoon baking powder, 8oz. plain flour, 8oz. fruit (cherries, ginger, green citron peel, cry. pineapple, and sultanas). Cream butter and sugar, add eggs one at a time, and beat well, add milk then, lastly, sifted flour and baking powder. Add the prepared fruit. Place in 2 well-greased chess board tins and bake 35 minutes in moderate oven.

MOCK CREAM FILLING

One tablespoon butter, 1 tablespoon crystallised sugar, 1 tablespoon cold milk, 1 tablespoon boiling water.

Cream the butter and sugar very well, making as white as possible. Then add very gradually the cold milk; when it

is well worked in add gradually the boiling water. Beat well. Use as a filling for sponge sandwiches. The success in the making of this cream is the creaming of the butter and sugar and of gradually adding the liquids.

NEENISH CAKES

Good short crust, to which ground almonds and almond essence is added; custard, coffee glaze, white glaze.

Make short crust in usual way, into a stiff paste and press into shallow patty tins. This must be done evenly to a depth of a quarter-inch. Bake in a moderate oven till firm. The filling is a thick custard made in the ordinary way with cornflour as thick as blanc mange. When cool,

beat in sufficient butter to make it light and frothy. Flavor with vanilla. Fill the tarts nearly to the top with mixture and run over it a thin layer of white icing. The difficult part is to get the coffee glaze on exactly one-half. Make the coffee glaze. Place the tart on the palm of the left hand, then dip a knife into the icing and lay the back of it on the centre of the tart and draw it off quickly. Keep the blade perfectly flat all the time. This will give the right proportion of coffee glaze.

COFFEE CREAM CAKE

8oz. butter, 8oz. sugar, 4 eggs, 4 tablespoonsful milk, 2 tablespoonsful coffee essence, 1lb. self-raising flour, coffee mock cream, chopped walnuts, coffee icing, whole walnuts.

Cream the butter and sugar. Add egg, mix coffee essence, and milk gradually, lastly sifted flour, mix in well. Pour mixture into a straight-sided baking dish. Bake in moderate oven 35 to 40 minutes. Turn on to cake cooler. When cold cut in half. Join the two portions together with coffee mock cream to which chopped walnuts have been added. Completely cover with coffee walnut icing and decorate with whole walnuts.

COFFEE ROLL

Three ozs. butter, 3 ozs. sugar, 1 egg, 1 pint milk, 1 lb. plain flour, 1 teaspoon carbonate soda, 2 teaspoons cream of tartar.

Cream butter and sugar. Add beaten egg, then milk, lastly flour, carbonate soda and cream of tartar well sifted. Turn on to floured board. Knead slightly. Roll out thinly. Cut into rounds with plain cutter. Fold in half. Glaze. Bake on greased Swiss roll tin in hot oven 10 to 12 minutes.

CHOCOLATE SHORTCAKE

Six ozs. shortcrust, jam, 2 ozs. butter, 2 ozs. sugar, 1 egg, 2 ozs. plain flour, 1 dessertspoon grated chocolate.

Roll pastry out thinly into a square and place in a greased Swiss roll tin. Spread with jam. Beat egg well. Add the sugar, then chocolate, flour, melted butter. Spread evenly over the jam. Glaze with egg and sprinkle with sugar. Mark into fingers. Bake in a moderate oven about 20 minutes. Leave on tin till cold. Sprinkle with icing sugar and cut into the marked fingers.

CHERRY ALMOND CAKES

Two ozs. butter, 2 ozs. sugar, 2 eggs, 1 oz. grated almonds, 4 ozs. self-raising flour, cherry jam, glaze, cherries, warm icing, carmine.

Cream the butter and sugar. Add beaten eggs, then sifted flour and almonds. Bake in well-greased shallow baking tin in moderate oven from 25 to 30 minutes. Turn on to cake cooler. When cold cut into diamonds. Split each diamond through the centre. Spread with cherry jam and join again.

SPONGE ROLLS

are always popular for afternoon tea. There's a knack in rolling them, but it's easily acquired if you follow the recipe carefully.



NEENISH CAKES are delicious and not nearly so difficult to make as they appear. See recipe.

SPONGE ROLLETTES

Three eggs, 4oz. sugar, 4oz. self-raising flour, 3 tablespoons warm water.

Prepare the tins, grease the bottom of 2, 9in. x 9in. Swiss roll tins, slightly. Cover evenly with white kitchen paper and grease the paper and the sides of the tins. Separate the whites and yolks of the eggs, beat the whites stiffly, add the unbeaten yolks, then the sugar, and beat till stiff and frothy. Add the sifted flour and stir in lightly. Lastly add the water. Pour the mixture in the prepared tins and bake in a moderate oven from 10 to 15 minutes. When cooked turn on to a damp cloth, remove the paper and roll up. Unroll, lift on to a piece of paper which has been sprinkled with icing sugar, cut off the edges, spread with jam and roll up until it joins, then cut off and roll the other pieces, then cut the rollettes into the size required. Allow them to remain on a cake cooler until cold. The rolling must be done very quickly, otherwise the mixture goes crisp and the rolls are very hard to handle.

MOCK CREAM

One tablespoon butter, 1 tablespoon crystal sugar, 1 tablespoon milk, 1 tablespoon boiling water, 1 dessertspoon coffee essence.

Cream butter and sugar well together. Then add milk very gradually, lastly the boiling water drop by drop. Add essence.

APPLE TEA CAKE

One large cup self-raising flour, 1 tablespoon butter, 1 cup sugar, 1 egg, 1 cup milk, 1 apple, ground cinnamon, extra sugar for top.

Sift the flour. Rub in the butter. Add sugar. Beat egg and milk together and add to dry ingredients. Put mixture into a well-greased sandwich tin. Peel the apple and cut into very thin slices. Place the slices of apple over the cake mixture and sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon. Bake in a moderate oven 20 to 30 minutes. Before serving split and spread with butter.

HORT HOLBROOK says: "When appetites are in every night, Holbrooks' Biscuits will put it right." The World's Aspetites & Biscuits



COFFEE CREAM CAKE is one of those light, nourishing cakes which are especially useful in summer and are quite simple to make.

mustard have been added. Wet round the edge and roll up. Fasten the ends. Dip in flour, etc., then egg glazing. Toss in the crumbs. Wet fry till a golden brown. Drain. Serve on paper d'oyley. Garnish with fried parsley.

BENGAL CHUTNEY

Two lbs. apples, 1 lb. brown sugar, 1 lb. raisins, 1 oz. ginger, 1 oz. garlic, 1 pint vinegar, salt, cayenne.

Peel and core the apples. Cut into slices, then with the mill and garlic put through a sausage-machine. Then add other ingredients. Place in a stone jar, cover and place in a hot oven for six hours till it becomes a pulp. Bottle and cork tightly.

BREADCRUMB TART

Half a cup white breadcrumbs, 1 cup milk, 2 eggs, 2 tablespoons butter, 1-3 cup sugar, rind and juice 2 lemons, 1 cup raisins, shortcrust.

Make the shortcrust and roll into a round and line a deep sandwich tin or deep plate. Soak the breadcrumbs in the milk for 15 minutes. Cream the butter and sugar, then add the well-beaten eggs, the grated rind and juice of lemons, crumbs, milk and, lastly, the well-chopped raisins. Pour into the pastry case. Bake in a moderate oven until centre mixture is set. Serve cold.

CHOCOLATE SCONES

Four cups plain flour, 4 teaspoons baking powder, 1 small cup sugar, 1 1/2 tablespoons cocoa, 1 cup milk, 1 1/2 cups water, 1 large teaspoon butter, 1 teaspoon salt.

Sift the flour, baking powder, salt and cocoa well together. Rub in the butter, add the liquids making into a soft dough. Turn out onto a floured board. Knead slightly, roll out, cut into rounds. Place on a greased tin. Glaze with a little milk, and bake in a hot oven from 10 to 15 minutes, according to the size.

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For YOUNG WIVES & MOTHERS

What the Nursing Mother Should Eat!

By Mary Truby King

Daughter of Sir Truby King, the World-famous Authority on Baby Welfare.

There should be no necessity for radical changes in diet for the nursing mother, provided her accustomed fare is well balanced and her digestion is not impaired.

THE nursing mother should have three meals a day, taking the main meal at midday if possible.

It is a great mistake for the mother to have a large evening meal or a meal later than 7 p.m., though a bedtime cup of warm milk or milk and water is allowed if the mother finds it helps her to sleep well.

The nursing mother should make very little change in her diet, providing, of course, that her previous diet has been sensible and well balanced and has hitherto agreed with her.

Take Fruit Juices

The notion that orange and lemon juice will turn the breast-milk sour is quite a wrong one. Fruit juices are necessary and should be taken daily between meals. Another erroneous idea is that green vegetables produce indigestion.

There may be a tendency for certain vegetables to upset in individual cases. In this case that vegetable should undoubtedly be avoided, but in the majority of cases all vegetables agree and are most necessary for their roughage and mineral content.

It is not sufficiently understood that over-eating lessens the quantity of breast-milk.

Many mothers in a natural endeavor to increase their milk make the mistake of overloading their digestive organs with food. This additional strain upsets the organs concerned, though for a little while they may make a gallant effort to deal with the excess material supplied to them. Indigestion and constipation follow, and the natural milk decreases instead of increases. Overloading the body with frequent drinks of cocoa will not increase the quantity of breast-milk though it often produces too high a fat content in the milk, thus upsetting baby's digestion. One cup of cocoa daily is quite sufficient.

Milk Contains Calcium

IN order that baby's teeth may be strong, the expectant and nursing mother should drink one pint of milk daily, as milk contains an excellent supply of calcium. Lime salts are also supplied in vegetables, cereals and eggs. If sufficient milk is taken there is no need to drink lime water.

Nursing mothers, who wish to increase

How To Stand...

When Being Fitted

MANY a woman blames her dressmaker, or tailor, whichever the case, if her clothes do not fit, and really it is her own fault. Often, for example, when a woman is being measured, she expands her chest more than usual, or else contracts it. Sloping shoulders are allowed for in cutting, and it is fatal to try to square them while being fitted.

A round-shouldered woman, especially, is often guilty of standing rigidly to attention, like a toy soldier, when being measured. When she reverts to her usual carriage in the new garment, it proves to be too tight across the back.

Frocks with close-fitting bodices are another common source of complaint. Do not wear old corsets when being fitted, and new ones with the new frock, as, naturally, the latter entirely alter the figure.

Stand naturally, and wear suitable underwear, and there will be a fit without a "fit" when the finished garment is delivered.

their supply of breast milk should express by hand every drop of milk left in the breasts after each of baby's feeds. Do not express for more than two minutes at each breast after a twenty-minute feed. The breasts must be completely emptied at each nursing time.

Diet Recommended To Increase Milk Supply

On Waking: A glass of water and an apple.

Breakfast: A plate of cereal with half a pint of milk. A little sugar. Wholemeal bread and butter, or one day-old white bread, toast and butter. A codded egg, or bacon and tomato. Cup of weak



FRANCES DRAKE, Paramount player, favors this youthful-looking blue crepe frock, with organza collar and cuffs, for between-season wear.

tea or weak coffee. An orange or any fresh ripe fruit in season.

Middle of Morning: Drink of fruit juice and water.

Between Breakfast and Dinner (mid-day): Two or three glasses of water (in addition to the fruit juice).

Dinner (mid-day): A little vegetable soup. Meat (a satisfying helping of lamb, beef, mutton, liver, fish or chicken). Two vegetables. A little potato. Stewed fruit or fruit salad, with milk, cream, or ice cream. Or milk pudding and stewed fruit. Glass of milk.

During Afternoon: Two glasses of water. Drink of pure orange juice. Cup of weak tea, if liked, but nothing to eat.

Evening Meal: A salad with simple dressing. Wholemeal bread. Honey. Cheese. Cup of cocoa (made with milk). Fresh fruit.

On Retiring: Glass of milk and water or pure milk.

A glass of water should be drunk at each of baby's feeding-times.

If any article of diet is found, through the milk, to disagree with baby, each article should, of course, be deleted from the menu.

There is no need to go to the expense of buying patent preparations which purport to increase the flow of breast milk. Nine times out of ten they are not effective, and when they are, it is usually from a psychological point of view only.

STARCH

The Right Way to Make It!

To make hot water starch mix the starch to a paste with cold water, then pour actually boiling water over the starch, stirring the whole time, until the starch becomes clear. Stir round two or three times with a piece of wax candle, which not only gives a smooth, shiny appearance to the linen, but also prevents the iron from sticking.

To make cold water starch: Mix the starch to a smooth cream with cold water, then add borax dissolved in boiling water in the proportion of a teaspoonful to a teaspoonful of starch, and four drops of turpentine.

HOMER HOLMES says: I blend, I stir, and I brew the Sauce of the House of Holbrook. The World's Appliance.

BEST RECIPE PRIZES

Make a New Year resolution to send in to us your favorite recipe, one that you have tried and found satisfactory, and see if you can win one of our prizes. Each week we give a cash prize of £1 and twelve consolation prizes for the best recipes sent in by readers.

THIS week's prize-winners are as follow:

CURRENT SQUARES.

Pastry: 6 ozs. S.R. flour, 2 ozs. butter, 2 to 3 tablespoons milk, pinch of salt. For Cake Mixture: 2 ozs. butter, 4 ozs. sugar, 2 eggs, 6 ozs. S.R. flour, 3 tablespoons milk, flavoring. For Filling: 1 lb. currants, raspberry jam.

Make the pastry first; sift the flour and salt, rub in the butter until it looks like fine breadcrumbs; mix with enough milk to make a firm paste, knead well, then roll out fairly thinly. Line a flat tin with greased paper, and then spread the pastry with raspberry jam and sprinkle with currants.

The Cake Mixture: Beat the butter until soft, then gradually add the sugar and beat till creamy. Then add the well-beaten eggs by degrees, then the flavoring; sift the flour with a pinch of salt and add it alternately with the milk, stirring till a smooth soft batter is formed. Spread on top of the currants and bake in a moderately hot oven until done (about 40 minutes). When cold ice top with soft icing, and sprinkle thickly with chopped nuts.

First Prize of £1 to Miss D. M. Nuske, Mannum P.O., S.A.

DELICIOUS HONEY ROLL

4oz. self-raising flour, 2oz. sugar, 1 large tablespoonful honey, 3 eggs, 1 teaspoonful cinnamon, 11 table-spoonful hot water, pinch salt, caramel coloring.

Beat eggs and sugar till thick; add honey and beat well. Add flour, salt, and cinnamon, sifted together. Gently fold these into mixture, adding lastly the water and enough caramel to make a pale brown. Bake in a Swiss roll tin or paper, pinned to desired size, in a fairly quick oven for 10 minutes. Turn out quickly on to a damp cloth, remove paper. Roll up in the cloth, allow to stand one minute, unroll, and roll up out of cloth. When cold, fill with the following: 4oz. icing sugar, 1 dessertspoon honey, 1 dessertspoon butter, 1 teaspoon lemon juice, beaten well together.

Consolation Prize of 2/6 to E. M. Redpath, Box 15, Port Augusta, S.A.

HOREHOUND BEER

Place in a saucepan 2 tablespoons horehound herbs, 2 tablespoons hops, 2 tablespoons whole ginger (bruised), 1 tablespoon soap bark, 1 tablespoon liquorice root.

Cover with 4 quarts cold water and boil for half-hour. Have ready a clean kerosene tin, and place in tin the following: 7 cups of sugar, 1 teaspoon tartaric acid, 1 teaspoon cream of tartar. Strain all boiled ingredients into tin, and stir till sugar, etc., is dissolved. Fill the tin with cold water, add 1 bottle brewed horehound, to work the horehound quickly. Color with caramel. Let stand 12 hours, and bottle. This will be ready for use in four to five days.

Consolation Prize of 2/6 to Mrs. A. F. J. Thompson, Box 194, Home Hill, North Queensland.

SARDINE CIGARETTES

Scrape skins from sardines. Make a good pie pastry. Roll out very thin. Cut in pieces 3 inches long and 1 1/2 inches wide. Roll up each sardine in a piece of paste. Wet edges with milk to join edges nicely. Brush with egg. Roll in crumbs, or before rolling, dip each sardine in grated cheese. Fry in boiling fat. Drain well, and before serving, sprinkle over with grated cheese. Serve hot.

Consolation Prize of 2/6 to R. Turner, Surrey St., Epping, N.S.W.

RHUBARB CHUTNEY

3lb. rhubarb, 5lb. onions, 3lb. sugar, 1lb. sultanas, 3 tablespoons salt, 1 tablespoon cloves, 1 tablespoon chillies (in a muslin bag), 2 tablespoons mustard, 2 tablespoons curry powder, 1 cup treacle, 1 tablespoon turmeric.

Wash rhubarb well, cut into squares, also onions, add other ingredients, cover with vinegar (about 3 quarts), boil for 1 hour. Thicken with half-cup flour mixed with cold vinegar, and boil for five minutes.

Consolation Prize of 2/6 to Mrs. Stenhouse, 20 MacGowan St., Carnegie, S.E.9, Melbourne.

EGGLESS DEVIL'S FOOD

Half-cup shortening, 2 cups brown sugar, pinch of salt, 1 cup cocoa, 1 cup sour milk, 1 teaspoon vanilla, 2 cups flour, 1 cup hot water, 1 teaspoon soda.

Cream shortening, add sugar, salt, and cocoa. Add sour milk, vanilla, sift in the flour slowly, stirring well. Add



AH! THAT'S a good one.

hot water in which soda has been dissolved, and beat until smooth. Bake in layers in a moderate oven. Time in cooking, 30 minutes; temperature, 350 degrees. Recipe makes three eight-inch layers.

Consolation Prize of 2/6 to Miss Agnes Avar, Julia Creek, Qld.

CORNISH PASTIES

1lb. skirt steak, 1 onion, 1 large potato, 1 white turnip, 1 teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon pepper. For pastry (short crust): 1lb. flour, 1 teaspoon baking powder, 6oz. clarified fat or dripping, 1 teaspoon salt, 1 cup of water.

Prepare the mixture of meat and vegetables first. Chop the meat finely, put into a basin, and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cut vegetables into small dice and mix with meat. Now prepare the short crust. Sift the flour, baking powder, salt. Rub in fat until it looks like breadcrumbs, add water, gradually mixing into stiff paste. Turn on to floured board and knead gently. Divide the dough into six equal parts. Roll out about a 1-inch thick, keeping it circular. Place about one-sixth of the mixture on half of each round, moisten the edges with water, fold over the other half and press the edges together. Crimp the cut edges to form a frill. Prick with a fork and brush over with beaten egg and milk. Put into hot oven and cook for 10 minutes. Then lower the gas and continue cooking very gently for 40 minutes.

Consolation Prize of 2/6 to Mrs. D. Argue, 201 Chloride St., Broken Hill, N.S.W.

MOCK EGGS

Make a sponge, not too high. Cut into rounds the size of a small saucer; sprinkle

THE VERY LATEST...

A Stove that Cooks by the Heat of the Sun and Bread Baked by Radio Waves!

From MURIEL SEGAL
Our Representative in London.

(By Air Mail)

Among the amazing discoveries of the period are so many interesting scientific and everyday improvements that we are likely to take for granted what, in less sensational times, would make headline news.

THESE two—cooking by the rays of the sun and making bread without a crust forming by means of radio waves—are unique discoveries.

News has just come from America of this new method of cooking in a fuel-less stove which derives its heat from the rays of the sun. Dr. Charles G. Abbott of Mount Wilson Observatory, California, who has invented this system, thinks that it should be possible in the very near future not only to store the sun's heat for commercial purposes, but to store enough up to tide us over cloudy weather.

The cooking stove already perfected has an oven which, by means of an enormous mirror, reflecting the sun, develops a heat from 300 to 400 degrees Fahrenheit. The temperature falls so slowly that there is still enough heat left in the morning to cook bacon and eggs.

The other interesting culinary development is the use of radio waves in baking bread. Having a high penetrative power, the radio waves bake the loaf from the centre outwards, so that no crust is formed. Currents are generated in the dough, and it is claimed the heat will do the necessary baking.

Crustless bread would eliminate a great deal of waste. It is said that 20 per cent. of a loaf is wasted in hotels and restaurants through cutting off crusts when making toast or sandwiches.

Our Diet Hint

Stored Nutriment

By R. E. FIGGIS, Hon. Dietitian
The New Health Society

THAT neatly-packed little box of food substances known as a hen's egg is a rather wonderful collection of nutritional materials. Weighing about an ounce and a half (without the shell) the ounce of egg white is principally water. It yields only about one-third of an ounce of food substances. This is albumen, a very good protein, the body-building substance. The half ounce of yolk is the more important portion, providing about a quarter of an ounce of food substances. This part of the egg is rich in fat, calcium, phosphorus, and iron, all needed by the human being. Then, also, there are the necessary vitamins—five of them. Beaten or stirred up in a glass of milk, an egg is really an emergency meal, one of the very best. Boiling the egg does not destroy any of its food value, but it does make the white portion more difficult to digest. Frying it increases the indigestibility. Eggs and frying-pans should be divorced, or otherwise separated, by all good cooks.

with wine or juice from peaches. Cover with whipped cream. Take half a peppered peach (yellow one) and place flat side down in centre of cream-covered sponge.

Make one for each person as required.
Consolation Prize of 1/- to Mrs. R. B. Baines, 11 Sefton St., Preston, Vic.

NOVEL WALNUT PIE

Put 4lb. shelled walnuts through the mincer, spread a layer of rice boiled as for curry at the bottom of a well-buttered pie-dish. Add a layer of minced walnuts, then a layer of sliced tomatoes, and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Fill the pie-dish with alternate layers of the ingredients, pour in 1/2 cup milk or stock and cover thickly with wholemeal crumbs and 2 tablespoons of melted butter. Bake for 1 hour.

Consolation Prize of 1/- to Mrs. G. Trevelyan, 91A Lower North Rd., Prospect, S.A.

BENNETT SHAPE

One and a half dozen passion fruit, 1 1/2 pints of milk, 2oz. gelatine, 4 eggs, 1 cup of sugar.

Scoop centres out of the passion fruit and set aside to strain. Dissolve gelatine in half a pint of boiling water, separate the whites from yolks of eggs. Beat sugar and yolks of eggs together, bring milk to boil, then pour carefully over the eggs and sugar, beating well. Return mixture to saucepan and boil for 1 minute. Then add dissolved gelatine and strained juice of passion fruit. When mixture cool beat in the well-beaten whites of the eggs turn into wetted shape. Set aside to get cool. When cold, turn out on a glass dish and decorate with whipped cream, sugarcane, and some of the passion fruit seeds. Serve with whipped cream or boiled custard.

Consolation Prize of 1/- to Miss Gwen Fulton, 8 Silver St., Marriestown, N.S.W.

CHEESE SOUFFLE

Make a white sauce, using a tablespoon of butter, a small teaspoon of flour, and a large cup of milk. Into this put 1/2 cup of grated cheese and stir over the fire until it is melted. When it is thick add 2 or 3 beaten egg yolks, some salt and cayenne. Mix carefully, then



LET ME SEE, what shall I make to-day?

fold in the stiffly-whipped whites of the egg. Pour it into a well-greased (buttered) pie-dish, stand it in a pan of water, and bake in a hot oven with a low gas for 30 minutes, or until set.

Consolation Prize of 1/- to Mrs. M. Sullivan, 1 Swan St., Grange, S.A.

STEAMED CHERRY PUDDING

Half cup butter, 1 cup sugar, cups flour, 3 tablespoons baking powder, 1/2 teaspoon salt, 1/2 cup milk, 4 egg whites, 1/2 teaspoon essence of lemon, 1 cup stoned cherries. Cream butter and sugar, mix and sift the flour, baking powder and salt. Add cherries. Fold into creamed butter and sugar alternately with the milk; add flavoring. Lastly, fold in egg whites beaten stiff. Turn into a large buttered basin, cover and steam for 2 hours. Serve with a sauce made of extra fruit, stewed and sweetened, and use the egg yolks for a boiled custard as an additional sauce.

Consolation Prize of 1/- to Mrs. C. Meers, 21 Clifton Rd., Cleveley, N.S.W.

STRAWBERRY CREAM ROLL

Beat together 2 eggs and the yolk of another egg with 1/2 cup sugar, 1/2 cup milk, and 1/2 cup cream. Add 1/2 cup of flour sifted with 1/2 teaspoon baking powder, 1/2 teaspoon strawberry essence, and 1/2 teaspoon melted butter. Pour into a greased shallow tin and bake not more than 15 minutes in a moderate oven. Turn out, sprinkle with icing sugar, roll, and when partly cooled, unroll and spread with strawberry filling.

Strawberry Filling: Crush slightly 1 cup of strawberries, add 1/2 cup sugar, the white of an egg, and 1 tablespoon of cream. Beat until fluffy; spread thickly inside the roll and roll up.
Consolation Prize of 1/- to Mrs. G. Hegarty, Warwick, Qld.



APART FROM MAKING the utmost of every feature, Sylvia Sydney, of Paramount, possesses a graciousness of manner good to see, and a pleasing voice . . . qualities which every one of us may strive to emulate during 1935.

THE BODY BEAUTIFUL

A NEW YEAR Resolution for Every WOMAN:

"During 1935 I shall really try to grow more attractive. Never, never will I neglect beauty care—no matter the weather, the season, or the time."

BY
EVELYN

BEAUTY CARE need not be the bugbear the average girl or woman considers it to be. It is just a simple matter of consistent care. One need not have a luxurious regime—attention to health, to skin and hair, hands and feet, to details of your dress. . . Strive to be well groomed always—wear your simplest frock with an "air," and, last but not least, cultivate grace of movement and grace of manner.

WE all want to be young, and when I say that I do not mean that we want to be 18 years old for ever, but we all want to keep youth in our hearts and keep youth in our faces, too. I will promise to do everything I can to help you in the coming year; I will give you weekly advice (and inspiration), and I only ask in return that you will be consistent. Do what you will, heed what you may, but be consistent. . .

Now, I wonder if you realise that every day when you take your bath you are giving yourself the most important of all beauty treatments.

It is really the one beauty treatment that is done with unflinching regularity, and yet the greater number of us neglect to make the most of the opportunities it offers us.

For instance, a mustard or "ammonia" bath will make you feel as fresh as a daisy. . . Twenty minutes in a bath can be as restful as lying down for a couple

of hours in a darkened room. . . A perfumed bath is the most luxurious thing in the world—it begets confidence and a feeling of well-being.

Two tablespoons of ordinary household ammonia, or a tablespoon of mustard tied into a muslin bag and shaken into the bath, act as a kind of external cocktail.

For Slimming

EPSOM salts can be used for slimming baths—but not by anyone with heart trouble.

It is good, too, for anyone inclined to rheumatism.

A half a pound should be used for each bath, which should be fairly hot. In this you should soak until the water has cooled off considerably. Take care not to catch cold afterwards.

The best time to have such a beauty bath is just before retiring. You should sleep like a top then.

I have heard it said that Epsom salts, too, make the skin of the body satin smooth!

Good Soap Only

I BELIEVE in using the best soap only for the bath. Plenty of lather and,

for preference, a loofah—you know, one of those long fibre-like affairs shaped like an elongated cucumber.

You can give the skin a thorough rubbing down with one of these, and I guarantee that following a good rub down with a fairly coarse Turkish towel your skin will glow and tingle with health.

Now whilst you are in your bath you can give your face a beauty treatment—in a sense killing two birds with the one stone.

Wash first of all with lukewarm water and the purest of soaps, rinse most carefully, dry, and then smear on a generous supply of skin food.

Beauty Bringing

INCIPIENT lines and wrinkles should have a double portion of the beauty-bringing "food."

Allow the cream to soak in while you are in the bath.

The steam will open the pores and the cream will do its work more thoroughly than is possible at any other time.

After you have dried yourself give your face a few minutes' massage—using upward and outward movements; kneading gently the muscles with thumb and forefinger in the manner suggested a few weeks ago.

Then wipe off the cream, dab on a skin tonic, or rinse in plenty of cold water—the final rinse should include two or three drops of benzoin. This is not expensive to buy, and will last ever so long. Be sure to use only two or three drops in the final rinsing water.

If your skin is inclined to be dry you can apply a splendid face mask which can be doing its good work while you are in the bath.

Mix a little almond oil with some powdered oatmeal to the consistency of a smooth paste, and smear on the face and neck after cleansing your skin in the before-mentioned manner.

Rinse thoroughly after the bath in cold water.

WHAT MY PATIENTS ASK ME

PATIENT: Do you think there is any real danger of a strong-minded person getting into the habit of taking drugs? Doctors are loath to give medicine that will ease pain immediately, but I often wonder if the suffering of a patient and the bad effect on their constitution is not worse than any danger they run from acquiring the habit of taking drugs. I am thinking particularly of a sufferer from rheumatoid arthritis. Surely cases like this merit all the relief medicine can give them.

TO acquire a drug habit is bad. To become addicted to a drug that has narcotic effects is downright torture.

It is astonishing to note how quickly some individuals acquire such habits, the habit taking hold and becoming an obnoxious nightmare before they scarcely are aware of it.

That is why physicians are loath to administer or to prescribe drugs such as morphine, unless it is absolutely necessary and no other drug will do as well for the condition requiring such treatment.

Morphine is derived from opium. In small doses it produces a quieting effect and may act as a pain-killer. But the after-effects, even after a single small dose, may be headache, dry mouth, loss of appetite, and constipation.

In repeated doses, or when administered in a fairly large dose, morphine produces a state of excitement which is afterwards followed by sleep. The mouth may become so dry that swallowing is exceedingly difficult. Often, in addition, the patient becomes nauseated and vomits. Naturally, there is confusion and the patient feels dizzy. The pupils become small and the pulse slow. The alleged entrancing mental images that are said to go with the taking of morphine are largely fictitious. Cocaine, the active principle of the coca plant, is also habit-forming. It

allays pain, for which reason it is useful in minor surgical operations. Cocaine stimulates the mentality and produces unrest and excitement.

Heroin is another drug frequently used by addicts. It comes in powder form, and is sniffed. Its action on the nervous system is similar to that of cocaine.

When the habit of taking a narcotic has taken hold, especially in the case of morphine, cocaine and heroin, the sufferer no longer obtains any benefit from taking the drug, except to relieve the terrific craving and the abdominal pains, together with the excessive rest-



EXERCISE FOR BEAUTY
HERE'S A splendid exercise for strengthening abdominal muscles, posed by Mary Wallace, Paramount player. Raise the left foot on a chair or heavy box, then bring the head down to touch the knee.



BY A DOCTOR

lessness and worry that go with being deprived of regular doses.

NOTHING leads to such mental, moral and physical degradation so swiftly as do narcotics. The drug-taker often develops the habit in such an insidious manner that he scarcely realises that he is fast becoming one of its helpless victims.

Therefore, physicians cannot be too careful in prescribing habit-forming drugs, nor patients too careful in taking them.

The treatment of such addictions is a long and harassing experience, and some doctors believe that complete cure, without relapse, is impossible. It is one

Attend That Double Chin!

YOU can improve your double chin by splashing it well night and morning with cold water and then dabbing on a skin tonic. After this, pat it smartly with the back of the hand a number of times, until the skin tingles. Do this twice a day regularly, and I feel sure you will soon see an improvement.

thing to get a patient "off the drug," and quite another to keep him off.

It is not of narcotics alone that people, in general, should be careful. One can often develop non-narcotic drug habits from which it is exceedingly difficult to free oneself later.

In short, a drug habit is more to be avoided than is the proverbial "plague."

Is the SKIN CARNIVOROUS?

Just Read How Famous Beauties of Long Ago Kept Their Complexions in Repair!

History is silent as to the beauty culture of our mother, Eve. We know that she was very pretty and fair, that is all. But from the first centuries we find miscellanies of the objects of primary necessity, the objects of feminine toilette, and history scurries with details on the habits of the beauties of each epoch.

EGYPTIAN civilisation is the most fertile on this subject. Queen Nitokris notably, spoke much; the historian, Manethon, says that she was the most beautiful woman in the world. She was blonde, with a ravishing complexion. "Nitokris with cheeks of roses." And do you know what salve she preferred? The blood of beef of which she made frequent ablutions at fixed periods. The result was marvellous. No man could see her without falling madly in love with her beauty. She lived until the sixth dynasty when she had set up for herself one of the three big pyramids, that of Gizeh. And it was not long ago when Arabs used to say that her spirit comes out of this pyramid, and "makes every man who sees it mad with love," and each suddenly dies of sorrow.

several days each month with her face carefully covered with wide slices of veal, freshly killed, and washed her face in between times in a mixture of fresh milk, juice of a lemon, and white wine.

More near our own times, the beautiful Madame Recamier, who had at her feet all the celebrated men of the Consulate, utilised milk and split beans in the way of Ninon de Lenclos.

Many beauties used to make their maids mysteriously search for pieces of veal which they secretly applied on their forehead and cheeks in order to nourish their skin and preserve its vigor and beauty.

After Strenuous Exercise...



A lukewarm bath, to which a generous sprinkling of bath salts is added, followed by a cold shower and a brisk rub down, after indulging in any strenuous exercise over the week-end will refresh and rejuvenate, eliminate stiffness, and prevent that tired "Monday" feeling.



Don'ts For Girls

DON'T believe all the evil you hear.
DON'T be rude to your inferiors in social position.
DON'T underrate anything because you don't possess it.
DON'T go untidy on the plea that everybody knows you.
DON'T wear anything you can't pay for.
DON'T be inquisitive about the affairs of your most intimate friends.
DON'T express a positive opinion unless you understand perfectly what you are talking about.

BEGGARS' Horses

Continued from Page 11

TRUE enough—and it would be one more attractive bachelor between the woman and poor flirtatious inconstant Tony. And Stacey Burlesone was a man who could take care of himself.

Captain Burlesone perked up. "Well, do you know, Mrs. Wallingford," he said, "I'm ashamed to confess that the idea had occurred to me. I'm not a ladies' man as you know, but."

"Probably makes you all the more interesting to her," smiled Mrs. Wallingford, "quite a feather in her cap. As I've said before, the woman's a living enigma, but she is a woman, and I should think she'd be simply thrilled to find that you, of all people, took an interest in her."

"I'm no good at that sort of game, y'know, Mrs. Wallingford. I've never in my life."

"That'll be the attraction, the charm; and I don't mind telling you, Captain Burlesone—if you won't let it go any further, nor let it spoil you—that I, for one, find you an extremely charming person."

Stacey Burlesone actually blushed. "And I'll tell you what suddenly does occur to me," continued Mrs. Wallingford. "Do you realize that we're talking about a married woman, and quite probably a thoroughly nice, well-behaved, self-respecting married woman at that?"

"Yes," admitted Stacey Burlesone. "That's the trouble of it. I shouldn't be here bothering you, or rather I shouldn't be bothering you on this particular subject, if she were an eligible spinster. It's the fact that she is a married woman, and married to the man Mackleworth, that makes me so anxious about young Aubrey. And, anyhow, we weren't really talking scandal, were we? We're not proposing that I should elope with her—before Aubrey does. She's an extremely popular woman."

"With men," smiled Joan Wallingford. "And she's got to have friends—naturally." "Well, it's better that she should have men friends who—well—who know the rules of the game, and are not likely to come a cropper... get into a mess and... No, I don't mean that exactly. I mean men friends who can keep it..." "Platonic," suggested Mrs. Wallingford.

"Exactly. Men friends who can have a safe pleasant harmless friendship with a married woman; neither of them all the better for it."

"Yes. And you'd be a better lightning-conductor—if there were any lightning—than Aubrey Easterwood."

"Yes, I could certainly deal with Mackleworth better than Aubrey could, if he chose to be—nasty," he growled. "Why can't men let women alone," he added.

Joan Wallingford laughed outright. "Why, indeed," she smiled. "We women are terrible people."

"It'll all fixle out," she continued. "Either Aubrey or the Mackleworths will go on leave or be transferred sooner or later."

"Yes, but there might be the devil's own explosion before—the flame does fixle out."

"What d'you really fear?" "Well, trouble in general, and Mackleworth in particular. What I fear is the spoiling of Aubrey Easterwood. Soling and spoiling—of his nature, I mean, his character. He's such an extraordinarily amazingly nice boy. And Mrs. Mackleworth is, to say the least of it, just what you called her—an enigma, an unknown quantity, and, as you just mentioned, a married woman. And what I also fear is his professional and social ruin. Smash. . . . And suppose on top of that there's a divorce case, with Mackleworth doing his uttermost, and perhaps a whole string of co-respondents. . . . Trumped up by Mackleworth, I mean, of course. And young Aubrey with a badly damaged Mrs. Mackleworth on

his hands for the rest of his life. It would be his utter damnation. Destruction.

"Or again," continued Stacey Burlesone, "if it didn't come to that there might be a frightful row and a horrible scandal. I gather that Mackleworth is that sort of chap. Anyhow, I can't just stand by and see Aubrey riding straight for a precipice, and not do something about it."

"No," agreed Joan Wallingford. "You really came to ask me what I could do about it. . . . Would you like me to ask Mrs. Mackleworth to tea—and you drop in? We'll see what we make of her, and I could leave you alone with her for a while. You could fix up a ride or some dances, or something."

"That's awfully good of you, Mrs. Wallingford. Thanks so much." "It'll be a start anyway, and we may decide that she's as nice a woman as ever lived, and thoroughly good for our young friend."

"Yes, possibly as good for him as you'd be. Why on earth couldn't he have fallen in love with you?"

"Well, thank Heaven he didn't anyway," smiled Joan Wallingford. "Oh, this love business. . . . Silly boy."

AND so it came to pass. Her husband still being away on his shooting trip, Joan Wallingford wrote Daphne Mackleworth a friendly little note, inviting her to tea at 4 o'clock on Saturday. And at four-thirty Captain Burlesone called—and found that Mrs. Wallingford was at home.

With Mrs. Mackleworth he got on famously, splendidly, and, incidentally, quite corrected the wrong impression that that lady had formed of him. Why did people call him a crusty bachelor, a cynic, a surly hermit, a woman-hater, and all that?

Why, he was perfectly delightful. Charming. And it was natural charm, too. One could always tell when a man was laying himself out deliberately to captivate. He was just as attractive and interesting when he was sitting silent as when he was talking in his slow grave way. A solid, reliable person. A gentleman, and, albeit, witty, graceful, delightful, he was no hill-captain, no captivating woman-hunter. No gigolo and carpet-knight.

How different from the wretched boys who pestered her; the more experienced almost professional flirts; the furtive married men whose wives did not understand them; the old roués who sickened her. . . . Oh, men, men, men. . . .

And how different from the boorish bear she's been fool enough to marry. Dull, drunken beast.

And, somehow, when Joan Wallingford left them alone together as she went to interview her dirzie who was working, sitting on the floor in the back verandah, efficiently manipulating the sewing machine with the toes of his right foot, the name of Aubrey Easterwood was not mentioned.

No, somehow they talked about Captain Stacey Burlesone. And Mrs. Mackleworth, having metaphorically turned him inside out and upside down, liked him more and more, liked him enormously, but came regretfully to the conclusion that, like all the nicest men, he'd got no money, nothing much but his pay, and had transferred to the Indian Army for that reason.

Sad. Nevertheless, . . . he was a dear. Just the sort of man she adored, if only by reason of his being in such sharp contrast with the vast majority of the young fools, middle-aged scamps and aged flirts who flocked around her. A pity that Captain Stacey Burlesone didn't occupy the pretty financial situation enjoyed by young Aubrey Easterwood, or have the pleasing prospects of dear little Clarence Wellington.

For here was a man who attracted her tremendously, and at first sight. Actually a man whom she could admire and respect. Frankly and plainly, a man with whom she could fall in love. . . . Real love.

Please turn to Page 34

AS IF He CARED

"W

E don't know where Carol is" burst out Mr. Ogilvie bitterly, because Mrs. Stokel did not speak. "Carol went out of here this morning and we haven't seen her since."

"Where is she?" "We haven't heard from her," said Mr. Ogilvie, looking sick. "Not for hours. All the doctors are in from the cases. There isn't one where Carol should be."

"So all this fuss is about nothing, Julian," said Thelma Rhoden to Matrick impatiently, sulkily. "Dragging me into this horrible neighborhood on a wild-goose chase."

Mrs. Stokel glanced up at her quickly. She had never seen Thelma Rhoden in the flesh but she knew her from her pictures that were in all the magazines. She would have known her anyway. Mrs. Stokel went on rolling cotton onto topknots and looked at Thelma Rhoden. At the white velvet coat and the staring whiteness of her flesh under it and the pearls that seemed to cling and coil about her breast.

"Mrs. Stokel," said Mr. Ogilvie, hopelessly, accusingly. "Isn't worried, but I'm worried. I think something awful has happened to Carol."

"Something happened to her!" Julian Matrick whirled on him. "Is it unusual for her to be out like this? Don't you know where she is?"

"She's never done it before," said Mr. Ogilvie. "And everybody else has reported in." His face worked. "She's all by herself somewhere," he said.

"Dr. Howes has gone out to look for her," said Mrs. Stokel, making swabs behind the counter.

"Howes?" said Matrick. "Does he know where she is?"

"If he knew," said Mrs. Stokel equally, "he wouldn't have to look for her."

Julian Matrick said nothing.

"I'm going home,"

said Thelma Rhoden. "What a horrible place!" Her eyes disdained the pebble-colored Bag Room.

"You are going to stay here and wait for Carol. You have things to explain to Carol," said Julian Matrick. It was like hail and wind, his voice. Mrs. Stokel stopped wrapping swabs to listen to the wind. She looked Julian Matrick over as if she had never looked at him before.

Nine o'clock came and, half past. Twice the telephone on Mrs. Stokel's counter rang and it was Phil Howes. He had found no trace of Carol. At twenty minutes to ten it rang again. Mrs. Stokel answered it. "Just the husband of one of the cases," she said, and once more the tension increased in the room.

"I'm going out myself," finally said Mr. Ogilvie. "You ought to have reported to the police, Mrs. Stokel."

Mrs. Stokel went on making swabs. "I did," she said. "Hours ago." Her quiet was terrible. It was more frightening than screams. Julian Matrick rose to his feet. He looked like death, as though the end of everything had come. "You did!" he said. "Then you think there is danger?" he said, just above his breath. His eyes, grey and cold, met Mrs. Stokel's, and hers were grey and cold, too.

"I think," said Mrs. Stokel, "anyone who loves Carol should be out looking for her." And the four of them stood there in the middle of an enormous quiet. And the face of Julian Matrick was staring at them all like the face of a man in a nightmare.

He turned to Thelma Rhoden. "Come on," he said quickly, "we're going to find her."

"Go ahead," said Thelma. "Do you think I'm crazy? Do you think I'm going to wander around this vile neighborhood? Carol's all right. She'll turn up sooner or later. She's always doing some crazy thing."

"After you," said Julian Matrick, standing aside and pointing to the door.

"I won't! In these clothes! And that's that. Ridiculous!"

He took her by the arm. "I don't care what clothes you have on," he said, and there was no violence in his tone, but the coldest kind of hatred. "I don't care if you're naked. You're coming with me, and we're going to find Carol, and you're going to tell her you've lied."

Her face was very close to his, staring at him with warm, dusky eyes, eyes in which so many men loved to wander lazily about. "This is how I like you," she said, very low, "when you are masterful, commanding, dreaming of Austenitz."

She laughed her tinkling little laugh and stooped down to smell the hyacinth that was beside her on the counter. "Let's go back to my place," she said; "there's no need to worry about Carol."

Mr. Ogilvie walked out of his cage. He picked up the plant. He carried Carol's plant back to the shelves and placed it there. "It's in a draught," he said. "That's Carol's plant." He looked

at Thelma. "I'd thank you," he said, "not to touch it again." He drew away from her. "I shouldn't wonder," he said clearly, "if it was on account of you, somehow, that Carol hates hyacinths."

"I happen to love them," said Thelma and her scornful eyes dismissed old Ogilvie as though he were of too low an order to be capable of insulting her.

"We're going," said Matrick, and something in his tone cut her short. She quivered with anger, but she went.

It wasn't pleasant walking through Rosa Pavese's tenement. Matrick hadn't found it pleasant that morning. Thelma, stumbling through the unpleasantness, through the dark corridors and up the repulsive stairs, stared fixedly ahead. She held her nose, she held her dress up from the steps. She stared fixedly at the great back that was ahead of her, and at the hand that pulled her along. "Let's get out of here," she begged, "or I shall be sick."

"Go ahead," said Matrick. "But if Carol can stand it, I think you can." He went on up. It was now nearly midnight. The tenement was as quiet as a village. Its emptiness sneered at them through dim, gas-lighted hallways. "Have you any idea where you are, or why?" demanded Thelma, stumbling. As a matter of fact, he knew where, but not why—if he had been sane he would have seen that the whole affair of his coming there, of dragging Thelma with him, was quite pointless. He had come to where he had last seen Carol, to a case that he knew was of her importance. All that would happen would be that they would find themselves at the top of the tenement, having awakened each tenant on the way up, and having found the Pavese's, they would find no Carol there.

When they had reached the next to the last flight, when they saw above them a skylight that must mean the top, they came to a door from around which a thin line of light showed. And there were the sounds of voices and of movement. Matrick knocked, and a small man opened the door. He seemed a very much worried little Italian.

Matrick started to say, "Is Miss Marsh here?" And then, beyond the man, he saw a figure in a white overall apron. The figure turned, and he and Carol confronted each other. She gave a violent start. Matrick pulled Thelma Rhoden in with him. He paid no attention to the little Italian. He turned to the woman in the bed.

"I've come to find out what is wrong," said Julian Matrick—"between us, I mean. I've brought Thelma so that we can all understand."

Carol stood like a girl made of marble. She looked at Julian Matrick, she looked at Thelma. "Is he crazy?" she asked the other woman.

"Of course, he's crazy," said Thelma. Matrick stood beside them, dark, forbidding, thoughtful. He met Thelma's eyes for several seconds. "I think you have something to say to Carol," he said.

She looked back at him insolently. "This is no time for a speech," she said. "I'm going."

"You're going when I'm ready to let you, and it's a fine time for a speech. All you have to do is to tell Carol how I feel about you. The rest I can tell her myself."

And Thelma, looking at him sullenly, said, "All right, I lied to her. I thought I wanted you back. I thought you were wasted on her, but now I see that you're just about good enough for each other." She looked at Carol contemptuously. "If you want that, concocted pup," she said, "it shows that you're crazier than I thought."

Carol was staring at her. "But why did you tell me so many untruths about him?" she asked.

"Oh, I don't know," said Thelma. Her eyes were expressionless with what she meant to be contempt. "I'm going home," she said, "if your Italian friend will see me to a taxi-stand."

"Take my car, of course," said Matrick. "I'll see that Carol gets home."

"Thanks," said Thelma—and walked out of the room.

Matrick turned to Carol. "The first thing we'll do is telephone Mrs. Stokel that you're safe. She's worried sick about you."

Carol stared. "Worried?" she said. "Why, Mrs. Stokel told me I'd better stay a little longer. Rosa had a sort of hysterical fit because the baby didn't eat. Mrs. Stokel knew that. I've telephoned her twice."

EVEN when they got back to Slade there seemed to be nothing to say to that. Mrs. Stokel looked up calmly from her swabs, but Mr. Ogilvie looked as though the strain had nearly killed him.

"So it was you that found her, was it?" said Mrs. Stokel to Julian Matrick. If she felt a passing regret for the failure of Phil Howes she did not show it. "Well, what I always say is, the best man usually wins. You can pretty nearly bank on that."

Mrs. Stokel knew herself to be no superwoman. Here and there, she remembered, her career was doctored with mistakes in judgment. But she wouldn't let on about that to Mr. Ogilvie.

"I always said she ought to marry Julian Matrick," said Mrs. Stokel, putting away her swabs, nodding her head up and down. "I always liked that strong, silent type."

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December 29, 1934.

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Material Required: 2 yards, 36 inches wide.
Turnings must be allowed when cutting.

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WW848.—Even the schoolgirl thinks her holiday port is incomplete without a pair of slacks and a shirt blouse. Pattern for a girl, 6 to 14 years. Material for 14 years: Blouse, 1 1/2 yards, 36 inches wide; Slacks, 2 1/2 yards, 36 inches wide. **PAPER PATTERN, 10d.**

JACK, AHoy!

WW847.—A delightful sailor suit, designed to please the small boy. The trousers have wide legs and are buttoned on to the blouse at the waist. Pattern in sizes 2 to 6 years. Material for 6 years: Blouse, 1 yard, 36 inches wide; trousers, 1 1/2 yards, 36 inches wide. **PAPER PATTERN, 10d.**



WW 842

WW 843

WW 844

WW 845

WW 846

SMART GOLF OUTFIT.
WW843.—A jumper blouse with short sleeves would be delightful for holiday golf. The blouse is worn outside the skirt, which has low pleats at the base of the panels. Material for 36-inch bust: Blouse, 1 1/2 yards, 36 inches wide; skirt, 2 1/2 yards, 36 inches wide. Other sizes, 32 to 40 inches. **PAPER PATTERN, 1/1.**

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WW844.—Brighten up your sports frock with an inexpensive little coat of check taffeta. The frock has short sleeves and a turn-down collar. Material for 36-inch bust: 3 1/2 yards, 36 inches wide. Coat, 1 1/2 yards, 36 inches wide. Other sizes, 32 to 40 inches. **PAPER PATTERN, 1/1.**

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THERE is a distinctive line in the party frock made from our free pattern this week; while the sports frock, cut from the same pattern, depicts a smart simplicity.

The sleeves may be short, or cut below the elbow, where they finish with a pleated section. Skirt has low pleats added on each side.

Pattern is cut to fit a 36-inch bust. Material required: 3 1/2 yards, 36 inches wide. Turnings must be allowed when cutting out.

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CHAPTER 19.

FLIES round the

honey-pot.

Captain Stacey Burlesome sat on one side of Mrs. Mackleworth in the Gymkhana Club ballroom. On the other side sat Lieutenant Aubrey Easterwood. In front of her, Major Moresby Wallingford and a group of young men and not-so-young men joined in the conversation, asked for dances and generally displayed their liking for honey.

The conductor of the band of the Northumberland Light Infantry, up in the musicians' gallery, rapped smartly with his baton, and Mr. Clarence Wellington, the assistant magistrate of Quettawur, pushed a little brusquely and importantly through the group of courtiers and into the immediate presence.

"Our dance, I think, Mrs. Mackleworth," he said proudly, triumphantly, and, in the opinion of Stacey Burlesome and Aubrey Easterwood, too possessively and very fatuously.

Smiling, Mrs. Mackleworth rose to her feet, and, with a "mind this for me," handed her bag to Stacey Burlesome.

Aubrey Easterwood frowned.

"And you mind this, Aubrey," she said, giving him a small fan.

Easterwood's frown turned to an ecstatic smile and then to a cold glare, as he regarded the retreating form of Mr. Clarence Wellington, and then the bag entrusted to Stacey Burlesome.

"Damned little squirt," he said. "Can't stand the bumptious pup," agreed Stacey Burlesome, as from his forefinger he dangled Mrs. Mackleworth's little bag, by its golden chain.

Coldly and doubtfully he eyed the fan which in Easterwood's powerful fist, looked incongruous, especially when, opening it, he began gently to fan his heated face.

Bones divided.

Gliding past in Clarence Wellington's arms, Mrs. Mackleworth bestowed a brilliant, charming and delightful smile which, beginning with Burlesome, ended with Easterwood.

As she and her partner passed the big open doors that gave on to the large front verandah, a big, burly, thick-set man stepped into the doorway, glanced around, and then, raising a large hand, beckoned urgently, imperiously. Not with the beckoning finger of request, but with the quick-moving hand and arm that command, definitely the ordering gesture of superior to subordinate, of master to servant.

MR. CLARENCE

WELLINGTON, ardently gazing at Mrs. Mackleworth's face, saw that she suddenly flushed, that her eyes flashed as she looked over his shoulder.

Being in the act of turning, he immediately saw the cause of her change of countenance, and found himself the recipient of the urgent call conveyed by the instantly beckoning hand.

"Your husband..." he said, as his back turned again to the doorway and Mrs. Mackleworth again faced it.

"My husband," she agreed.

"He—seems to want to speak to you—or me... or both of us," muttered Wellington.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Mackleworth. "I don't think it can be anything as urgent as all that. He might wait until the dance finishes, mightn't he?" asked the young man.

"He's going to, anyway," said Mrs. Mackleworth.

But he wasn't.

As in their course round the rather crowded floor, the couple again passed the doorway, the big man stepped into the ballroom, confronted them, impeded their progress, and indeed definitely arrested it.

"I'm going home," he growled.

"Well? Good night, then," replied Mrs. Mackleworth.

"I'm going home, I said. Come along," replied the man.

"Really, Captain Mackleworth!" interposed Clarence Wellington. "In the middle of a..."

The man turned his heavy face and the hard stare of his angry sullen eyes toward the speaker, but made no other reply.

Turning her back upon him, Mrs. Mackleworth replaced her hand upon Wellington's shoulder, and took a step to continue the dance.

"Come along, I said," growled Captain Mackleworth, and, seizing his wife's wrist, jerked her roughly in the direction of the doorway, led or pulled her through it, and, with a quite unmistakable swing of his powerful arm, slung her in the direction of the steps, at the bottom of which his car was standing.

Recovering her balance, Mrs. Mackleworth drew herself up, turned, and faced her husband.

"We won't have a scene here," she said quietly. "Do you think I might be permitted to get my bag and fan?"

"Oh, to hell with your bag and fan. Or send your little dog for them."

Clarence Wellington was forced to accept the evidence of his eyes and

BEGGARS' Horses

ears. It was part of his profession to accept or reject evidence.

Obviously with truth, his eyes and ears had told him that a man, a member of the club, had stepped into the club ballroom, interrupted a lady and her partner in the middle of a dance; ordered, and then hustled, the lady out of the ballroom; spoken to her as though she were a dog—and had then actually called her partner one!

But this was incredible, impossible. Such things did not happen in civilised society.

This man was an "officer and a gentleman." A very notorious one, it was true. Famous for his shocking manners, gross rudeness to all and sundry, and general bearishness and brutality. People said he trained too hard and wore his nerves to a frazzle. Others said that he drank like a fish. . . . Anybody would think he drank, but, of course, that couldn't be the case with a boxing champion.

On the other hand, though, he might have regular drinking-bouts between periods of training. After all, he only had to go into training and get himself fighting-fit once a year. Yes, perhaps he drank. Probably he'd been

"Er—Mrs. Mackleworth is—er—just going. I've come for her bag and fan."

"Just going!" exclaimed Aubrey Easterwood. "But I'm having the next dance with her."

"You're not," muttered Wellington.

"And I was under the impression that I was having the one after next," growled Stacey Burlesome.

"Well, you're not," Wellington assured him.

The friends rose as one man.

"I'll take her bag to her myself—thank you," said Burlesome.

"And I'll take her fan—thank you," said Easterwood.

"And I'll take her wrap—thank you," scored Wellington.

And, followed by Wellington, the other two made their way round the ballroom to the verandah.

Evidently something was "up."

Men had come to the door of the bar at one end of the verandah; others were standing about, by that of the cardroom at the opposite end; people who had been lounging in the ballroom doorway watching the dancers were now watching Captain and Mrs. Mackleworth, who stood at the top of the steps leading down to the drive.

To A CLOUD ★ ★

MORNING gives you birth—O Cloud!
Yours is all the Earth—O Cloud!
Yours the valley and the hill,
And the feathered wings unstill,
Yours the venturing, O Cloud,
And the wandering at will.

Like a brave heart faring,
Cloud,
With the hope unwearing,
Cloud,
Yours the breast of Beauty stirred,
By the East Wind's whispered word,
Yours the mountain's brow, O Cloud!
And the freedom of the bird.

Evening's arms are tender... Cloud,
Sunset gives you splendor... Cloud,
Yours the fiery castles light,
And the Storm-God's thunderous flight,
Yours the tranquillity, O Cloud,
Of the moon-enraptured night.

Verse and
Drawing by
PIXIE
O'HARRIS.



drinking now. Spent the whole night in the bar.

Yes, he must be drunk; and he must be carefully handled. Any person with a grain of common sense knows that a drunken man must be humored and carefully handled.

Mustn't have a scene, especially with such a huge and powerful ruffian as Mackleworth the boxer. Be all the more difficult for Mrs. Mackleworth if there were a row and the fellow's foul temper were made worse.

Discretion definitely the better part of valor.

Yes, he must be humored and...

"Fetch my wife's bag and fan."

Clarence Wellington almost jumped, so threatening was the glare of those savage, sunken eyes, so ugly the growl of that menacing voice.

Drunk—of course. And to be humored.

"And my wrap—if you'd be so kind, Clarence. I left it on my chair."

"Yes—Clarence dear!" jeered Mackleworth, and Wellington obeyed promptly. Obeyed Mrs. Mackleworth, of course.

Nimble and gracefully the young man threaded his way across the crowded ballroom to where sat Stacey Burlesome and Aubrey Easterwood, the one dangling a little pet point bag on his finger, and the other somewhat suddenly opening and shutting the fan.

Both, looking up, eyed him with surprise and what to a young man less sure of himself and his welcome—would have seemed distaste.

Someone had seen something and the news had spread.

Mackleworth again...

Mrs. Mackleworth was calm, self-possessed, apparently unperturbed. Captain Mackleworth, fags on hips, arms akimbo, stood looking like an angry bull, his back to his wife, growling towards the ballroom.

Suddenly he guffawed.

"Here's the procession," he said.

And, indeed, the three men in single file, each bearing the property of Mrs. Mackleworth, did rather suggest that idea.

"Enter slaves, bearing gifts," jeered Mackleworth.

"Here, give that to me," he added, as Wellington went gracefully to drape the light shawl about Mrs. Mackleworth's bare shoulders.

Swiftly the wise young man obeyed.

"And that," said Mackleworth, extending a huge hand for the tiny bag that Burlesome carried, still dangling by its gold chain, from his finger.

Eying him with all the contempt that he felt, Stacey Burlesome, with an ironical bow, handed the bag to Mackleworth.

As he did so, Aubrey Easterwood gave Mrs. Mackleworth her fan.

And with the fall of his eye, Mackleworth saw him do it.

"Oh, thanks so much," she murmured. "I'm so sorry about our dance, but..."

And she smiled the peculiar and intriguing smile that Aubrey Easterwood so loved.

"So sorry, Captain Burlesome," she added, "but..."

Continued from Page 32

And again she smiled with an almost imperceptible shrug of the shoulders.

"And no 'buts' for dear Clarence?" rasped Mackleworth.

His wife eyed him coolly.

"So sorry, Clarence," she said quietly. "To be continued in our next."

"Well, that being settled, you can return that fan to dear Aubrey, and he can give it to me."

Aubrey Easterwood was young, impulsive, quick-tempered, and desperately in love. To his credit he turned away with a brief,

"Good night, Mackleworth. Come and have a drink, Stacey; I'm for a strong peg of neat-soda-water."

There should be no scene, so far as he was concerned.

But Mackleworth held other views. If the whims, fancies and impulses of a man, under the influence of alcohol can be considered views.

With a stride surprisingly swift and light in so big a man, and an outflung arm, he seized Easterwood by the shoulder, swung him about and thrust his inflamed, scowling face, lowering and menacing, close to that of the younger man.

"Take that fan back from my wife, and then give it to me," he growled.

Easterwood returned the stare of the hard and cruel eyes, in which a fire seemed to smoulder when it did not flare and blaze.

He smiled.

"Why certainly," he said lightly. "All things according to ceremonial as laid down in the book, and so forth."

And with a bow he held out his hand for the fan.

With an equally ironical bow and enigmatic smile, Mrs. Mackleworth handed the bone—or ivory—of contention to Easterwood, who, taking it, offered it upon his joined palms, as though upon a cushion, to Mackleworth.

THE obvious mockery

of the gesture enraged that gentleman. Seizing it with his left hand, he delivered with his open right a tremendous cuff or clout upon the side of Easterwood's head—almost. But for the swiftest of movements, Easterwood had received a ringing box on the ear, which would probably have knocked him down.

"Playful to-night, Sir," laughed Easterwood, and turning swiftly on his heel, made for the bar.

Mrs. Mackleworth's eyes followed his retreating figure, and there was no smile upon her face.

Stepping up to the growling Mackleworth, Burlesome took him by the arm.

"I'm an older man than you," he said quietly, "and considerably your senior in the Army List. Listen. People lose their commissions for things like that, reported in the proper quarter—with witnesses' affidavits attached..."

Pull yourself together, man. There are ladies present—and a brace of perfectly good Generals in the card-room. Now then, come along home."

For a moment it looked as though Mackleworth was going to strike Burlesome.

"I'll drive you," added that wily man, "for I'm quite sure you can't drive."

"What?" growled Mackleworth. "You're a damned liar. What d'you mean, can't drive? Drive the car backwards at sixty if I wanted to."

"But you can't drive it forwards at ten miles an hour, for a start," replied Burlesome; and Captain Mackleworth promptly descended the steps, threw his wife's things into the car, and got into the driver's seat.

"Come along, Daphne," he said. "We'll show 'em."

"Good night, Captain Burlesome, and thank you so much," smiled Mrs. Mackleworth; and the look she gave him caused Stacey Burlesome's whole being to thrill. A new experience indeed.

He raised eyebrows of inquiry and was answered by a short, reassuring nod. Yes, she'd be safe enough in the car with her husband. Drink didn't affect his body.

And a moment later, driven rather fast, but with complete accuracy, the car sped down the drive, through the Club gates and out on to the dusty moonlit road.

If that swine wrecked the car with her in it, Stacey Burlesome would... would... wreck Mackleworth.

CHAPTER 11

CLAD in a heavy dressing-gown, a white singlet, blue shorts and thin kid boots, Aubrey Easterwood climbed into the ring, laid his arms along the ropes, leaned back against the padded post, closed his eyes, relaxed all his muscles and endeavored to make his mind a blank.

In the last-named effort he was not successful. Thoughts would come, of course.

First thoughts:

How fortunate were those boxers whose contests were staged in the open air, the glorious fresh air, instead of in halls and such ill-ventilated places where hundreds of selfish and unsporting spectators puffed forth clouds of cigarette, cigar, and pipe-tobacco smoke into the already fetid twice-breathed atmosphere. A pity some of them couldn't be made to take the place of the distressed boxer whose laboring lungs panted for air and for dear life.

Very fortunate indeed... Thank God for the cool, gentle breeze and for the sweet sense of space, cleanliness and freedom... the star-jewelled, moonlit sky for roof... No enclosing roof.

Second thoughts:

Those big acetylene lamps were very powerful and gave a strong glare. But that was all to the good, since one would not be looking upward. Couldn't have too much light when dealing with the great Mackleworth. Bright light, pure air, space... in which to try conclusions with Mackleworth. Conclusions...?

Third thoughts:

What a crowd! Probably a couple of thousand British soldiers present, not to mention civilians. Hundreds of those—a white sea of dress-shirt fronts surrounded by a sand-colored shore of khaki uniforms... That would make the sea a lake, since it was entirely surrounded by the sand-colored shore... A lake—and in the middle of it was the little island, the raised ring in which he was seated.

And the murmur of voices was like that of the waves of the sea—an insistent yet monotonous susurrous of sound—with here and there, a wave that broke higher than the rest, as some soldier called across to a friend.

Curious to think that that ocean of sound would be stilled the moment that he rose to his feet, and confronted Mackleworth. Curious to think that thousands of pairs of eyes were staring at him and that hundreds of tongues were talking about him.

What were they saying, the majority of them? That he hadn't a ghost of a chance against Mackleworth. Well, that remained to be seen. To be seen very soon, too. Perhaps it was just as well that he couldn't hear what they were saying. Not that they'd be able to give him any feeling of defeatism. No, not if every soul in that vast canvas-walled enclosure thought he was going to be beaten.

Fourth thoughts:

Was it a good thing or a bad thing, so far as winning a fight was concerned, to have a personal animus against one's opponent? In fact, to hate him with all one's heart and soul? Would that lend strength to one's blows, cunning to one's defence, determination and doggedness to one's will to endure; or would it mar one's coolness, warp one's judgment, detract from one's scientific detachment, so to speak?

Anyway, however much he loathed Mackleworth, whatever reasons he had for hating him, however much he longed to hammer him, smash him, defeat him, for his treatment of Daphne, as well as for his own sweet sake, one must, before all things, be cool, calm, clear-headed, single-minded.

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There's satin and lace, brocade, patchwork, gingham, tapestry, felt, linen, cretonne, darned net, and the smart, new knitted ones, "honeycomb" smocking, and hand-embroidered examples.

The loveliest cushion-covers may be created from scraps of pretty material, of lace, embroidery thread, knitting-needles, and wools, in clever fingers.

One of the sweetest bolster cushions I have ever seen was made from a band of straight material and smocked—note the replica in our sketch, showing immediately beneath the top round one. Not every home lover realises that smocking can be used to adorn household accessories.

Honeycomb smocking is not the least bit difficult, although the results look complicated.

Patchwork is quite the vogue, too, and "Crazy" designs are the simplest to evolve from colorful bits of silk or any material. Don't mix silks with cottons, of course. Alternate patches of printed materials are very effective, too, in patchwork cushions.

Tapestry cushions are beautiful—they last a lifetime but require hours and hours of patient application of the needle for their execution.

Gingham cushions are the smartest things for the breakfast alcove or verandah. Slip-off covers are best. They launder well, and often, and come up again fresh and crisp.

A combination of natural crash and felt is ideal for cushions to be used in study, verandah, garden, or car. Geometrical designs in applique suit them to perfection.

By the way, how would a "rising sun" cushion in felt and crash appeal to you? It is the bright one showing on the right immediately next the plain and brocaded yellow satin. Three colors in vivid contrast are used for the felt appliques. This striking design shows up more effectively on a natural ground.

Darned Net Cushion

NOW the darned net cushion—the large one you see immediately above Petrov's signature—is in darned net.

This only involves threading wools with a bodkin in and out of the meshes of a piece of filet net.

The materials needed for a cushion measuring 24 x 18 inches: 5-8ths yard of large-meshed natural filet net 36 inches

wide, 5oz. of 4-ply wools in various colors. A pretty combination would be two of jade and one each of lemon, orange, and black.

The skeins of wool, opened, cut into just the right lengths for spanning the width of the net. Allow good turnings on the net, for making up as a cover, but do not darn them.

Thread your bodkin with wool, using two strands doubled for each line. Work two lines of darning in each square of filet, alternating the picking up and leaving down of threads in each line. Cover the whole piece of net in this way.

The color arrangement on the model cushion is as follows, beginning from either end:—

Six rows, jade; 6 rows, orange; 4 rows, lemon; 2 rows, black; 4 rows, lemon; 6 rows, orange; 8 rows, jade; 4 rows, black; 8 rows, jade; 6 rows, orange; 4 rows, lemon; 2 rows, black; 4 rows, lemon; 6 rows, orange; 8 rows, jade; 4 rows, black; 8 rows, jade; 6 rows, orange; 4 rows, lemon; 2 rows, black; 4 rows, lemon; 6 rows, orange; 6 rows, jade.

Press the finished darning and back the cushion with casement cloth to tone.

A Bolster Cushion

NOW the bolster-cushion you see at the extreme right of the illustration is also knitted and measures when made up 25 inches long and 34 inches round.

I would suggest you using green, lemon, orange, and black.

Materials required: 21 ozs. of 4-ply orange wool, 1 oz. each of lemon and green, No. 8 bone knitting needles.

For a cushion measuring 21 ins. square, cast on 100 stitches. Work in stocking-stitch for 51 inches, then use the other colors as follows:

Knit 25 stitches in orange, join on the yellow wool and knit 25, join on green and knit 25, join on orange again and knit 25. You will need four balls of wool working at the same time. When you have worked in this way for 51 ins. reverse the two centre colors, so that green comes on top of the yellow block, and yellow on top of the green. Work 51 ins. in this way, and then change to an orange again.

Directions are given in this article for making a delightful darned net cushion cover, also a knitted square and bolster-shaped cushion cover.



We all know that where the background of a room is indefinite and unassuming, color is largely achieved through accessories — and cushions offer one of the happiest mediums for bringing in joyous, inspirational color and luxurious comfort—at little cost.

PETROV.

When you change from one color to another, knit the two wools together in the first stitch. Back the finished cushion with casement cloth.

Square Knitted Cushion

Here are the directions for the square knitted cushion you see on the extreme right of the picture.

I would suggest an orange border with alternate blocks of yellow and green in the centre.

It is worked on four needles in plain knitting, and has a crochet "cap" at each end.

To make it you will require: 3oz. 4-ply wool in green, 2oz. orange, 1oz. lemon, 1oz. black, No. 8 bone knitting needles.

Cast 126 stitches in green and knit 24 rows. Work in the other colors as follows:—2 rows black, 12 rows orange, 6 rows lemon, 3 rows black, 6 rows lemon, 12 rows orange, 2 rows black, 20 rows green, 2 rows black, 12 rows orange, 6 rows lemon, 3 rows black, 6 rows lemon, 12 rows orange, 2 rows black, 24 rows green.

THE CROCHET ENDS

Make 4 chain in black, join in circle: 3 chain and 18 double treble into the 4 chain, join into circle. Now in lemon: 3 chain and 1 double treble and 2 double treble into alternate double treble, all round for 2 rows. Repeat 2 rows in orange. The work should lie flat; you may need fewer increases if you crochet loosely. Make two of these circles.

Gather up one end of the knitted strip, lay the crochet circle over it and stitch into position. Insert the bolster pillow into the case. Gather up the open end and sew down the second "cap."

These wool cushion covers will wear extremely well and, of course, they will wash beautifully. Use a tepid lather and lay them flat to dry.



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TIME to KILL

"THIS can't go on," she warned herself. "I'm in danger, horrible danger. He can kill Hal, and nobody would ever know. After that, what would become of me?"

During the morning, when Hal was searching for fruit, Dave came to her. She was trying to cook a turtle, by the simple means of stringing it up on a bough above the fire, and turning it round and round with a stick. Dave, watching her for a moment, came closer.

"I guess you saw me last night?" he said.

"What right had you to come?" "Every right. The right of desire. I want you. I take what I want. I'll get you when I'm ready."

Again that urgent longing to scream, then the knowledge that she must not let him know how afraid she was.

"If it happens again, I shall tell my husband."

"There may be no husband to tell," he said, and tapped his knife.

"What do you mean?"

"See this? It amuses me when it turns red. Look!" He gashed at the turtle hanging over the fire. Instantly the knife dripped scarlet. She knew that she winced, knew that the eyes watching her were quite mad.

"Your husband's throat would be redder than that," he promised her, and he chuckled.

"Time to kill," she thought, "time to kill. One of us, but which?"

"Give me the knife," she demanded. He thrust it into his belt.

"Oh no, my beauty," he said. "That knife is my key to possession; with it I shall take you both," and again he laughed, a laugh which sent a parrot screaming out of the palm trees in dismay.

SHE told Hal at mid-day. "I believe he's mad," he said. "We've got to get the knife from him."

"But how?"

"If we don't manage it, it may be time to kill for one of us." His eyes were deadly stern.

Time to kill, she told herself. She went out to the bush with the cluster of dark berries, and picked a handful. "I've got to protect us both," she thought. "One of us three has got to die." She put the berries into water to soak, making a mixture from them. It would be simple enough to transfer it into the turtle stew to-night, or any night, if need be. She was amazed that she could contemplate such a thing.

Hal and Dave had their talk. They came up the beach side by side, and Hal drew Lois aside.

"I don't know what to think, Dave says he has only been teasing you," he said, and he tried to reassure her. "He never meant a word of it, but didn't realise that you were frightened."

Surely he had not gulled Hal like that! The hideous cunning of the man. She felt her heart becoming deadly still within her. Across the little intervening distance her eyes met Dave's. He saluted her gravely, touching his forelock with his knife, and his lips were laughing at her.

"Quo deus vult perdere, prius dementat," he said.

She wished she had never learnt Latin; she wished she did not feel so coldly sick. She pretended that she wanted his knife to cut the turtle. "Lend it me," she urged. "I want it for something else—bigger game."

Hal had not heard—Hal had not seen the fire in Dave's eyes, the insane flaming of a soul in hell.

She knew that it was to save Hal's life. She poured the mixture into Dave's portion of turtle and handed it to him without a tremor, watching him eat it, only thrilled with a cold and deadly horror—no more!

Afterwards, she watched him go to the corner of the beach where he had scooped himself out a little niche; to-morrow, a dead man would be found there, a dead man, and she could not be sorry.

She supposed she must have slept, though she had never thought she would be able to do so. She was awakened by the stir of someone coming up the beach in the moonlight. It was Hal, with his head held high, his bare feet making hardly any sound, and he carried a great stone in his hand. He crept into the hut beside her, and sat there shivering.

"Hal, what is it?" "I've killed him."

"Hal."

"Yes, I have. There wasn't room for the three of us; I suppose I knew it from the first. It was he or I, and for your sake it had to be him. Never thought I could do that. Murder in cold blood." He retched miserably.

Outside, the radiant moon looking down with a pale luminosity on the blue wash of the sea.

"You killed him?"

HOST HOT-SPRINGS says: My Anthony Paste is made from Italian Gorgonzola Anchovies. It makes dainty sandwiches and savories. 6/6 & 12/6.

"I tried to make light of it so you should not be afraid; but I was sick with fear myself. I bashed his head in."

She sat there very still, and she felt the blood flowing down into her fingers with strange little prickles. Then she put her arms round Hal.

"I had poisoned him first," she whispered. "We shall never know which of us was to blame. It had got to be—"

By the strange irony of fate, next morning a tramp steamer passing along the trade route rescued them.

IF only they had waited for a few more hours. There had been no need for this man to die. They had committed murder in cold blood, and he might so easily have lived. He should have lived, by every law. If only they had waited.

They told no one. That was their defence. No one would ever discover what had happened, for they did not know that Dave had ever been washed up on the island. And the hump of sand far away told no tales. The other survivors believed that he had been drowned—it was all quite easy.

Lois' nervous breakdown was accounted for easily enough by the dreadful experience she had undergone. Hal's strange moods were attributed to the same reason.

They came back to England, and they took up life in the little studio in Cheyne Walk; but whenever they looked across the greyness of the river, it seemed to them they were looking into a palm island in the heart of the West Indies, and seeing a strange hump that never ought to have been there.

"It can't go on," Lois told Hal. "If only we knew which of us had killed him, it wouldn't be so bad. That poison must have worked."

"I don't know. Those berries are slow. I've looked them up in the encyclopaedia. Mine was the coup de grace. Ought to give myself up."

"If you did, I'd give myself up, too."

"Darling, that would be absurd. It was in self-defence."

"It wasn't. It was to protect you."

The thing was murder, and it was haunting them. Reaching all the way from the West Indies here, to them.

Release came in a mysterious way. Life is not so cruel as she sometimes seems on the face of things.

One evening friends brought a stranger to the studio. His name was Reuben Gray.

"I asked them to bring me along," he said, "because I believe you went on that trip in the Starbelle, when she foundered in the West Indies."

BEGGARS' Horses

Continued from Page 34

YES, of course it was a bad thing to hate your opponent, to see him through the red mists of wrath. Why it was part of ring-craft to make your opponent angry, wild—literally so—in order that his blows might be equally wild.

Still, when it came to the chance of delivering the blow that he'd practised and delivered ten thousand times at the punching-ball, there might be a little extra in it, a little added weight behind it, that might not have been there had his opponent been anybody but Mackleworth.

This wouldn't do. There he was, getting all that again, clenching his fists and teeth, and fighting Mackleworth before he got into the ring. Absolute waste of energy, vitality and force.

Now then, to relax properly and to make his mind a blank.

Aubrey Easterwood opened his eyes as a hush was followed by a ragged cheer. The extremely popular Lieutenant-General commanding the division had entered, accompanied by the Brigadier-General commanding the Quettaur Brigade; a visiting Inspector-General of Cavalry; and a fourth General, a stray, passing through Quettaur on his way from Simla to Bombay. It was, of course, pure coincidence that the two latter happened to be in Quettaur at the time of the All India Boxing Tournament and the Heavyweight Championship contest.

"Is it going to be a fight or another Mackleworth murder?" asked the Inspector-General of Cavalry of the Divisional General.

"Well... I don't know," was the reply. "The youngster there is a bit of a dark horse, and I've heard interesting things about him. He's most amazingly strong. I'm glad it's only a three-round contest, though. Strength isn't everything."

"No," agreed the other. "I should say it isn't anything against science, and Mackleworth's got that all right. And strength as well. Strong as two people. Ever seen him box?"

"We did," said Hal, pouring out a cocktail for him.

"Then you knew my cousin, Dave Gray?"

For a second, Hal's eyes met those of Lois across the crystal glasses. She spoke for him.

"Oh yes. We knew him quite well," she said.

A hump of sand! A man creeping up the beach. Handing him turtle that was poisoned...

After the others had gone, Reuben Gray stayed on. He wanted to hear a little about the wreck.

"Poor old Dave," he said. "Yet it was such a good thing. You know he was mad, of course?"

"The captain said something about it. We thought he was queer."

Reuben sat there twisting a glass stem in his fingers.

"Dave had been mad for years. That wreck was the most blessed thing that ever happened. What would have occurred if he had come back I don't know. You see, he wasn't certifiable. He suffered agonies with it. One moment he'd be insane, and it would pass in a flash. He was married. Betty was scared stiff of him, but, although she had run away from him time after time, those same moments of his kept her chained. He had got her back. He would always have gone on getting her back. Only this time, this trip, she had fallen in love, and there was going to be a tragedy when he got home. There would have been killing done—I know Dave—and he would have stuck at nothing."

Husband and wife glanced at each other.

"Betty is terrified to this day that he will turn up again. She has that sort of idea, it haunts her. And... and she has got a kiddy coming. It's jolly bad for her. She is always possessed by this fear. That was why I came in to see you, to ask if you could tell me if he really died. We asked the captain and the others, but nobody really knew."

It was Lois who spoke. She poured herself out a drink, and sipped it in a leisurely fashion.

"He was washed up on the beach of our island," she said and her voice was perfectly calm. "We buried him between us. He—he was a ghastly sight. His head had been knocked in..."

They sat on talking. When they let him out, they knew that it was with light hearts. They had got back the youth they believed they had buried beneath a hump of sand.

"Well," she said.

"We did the right thing."

"Of course we did the right thing." She put her arms round his neck. "Both of us, we shall never know which; but oh, Hal, does it matter now?"

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LESS SPORT for Our SCHOOLGIRLS

Move to Restrict Time Devoted to Athletics!

It is only a year or two since girls' schools in Australia gave little or no opportunity for athletic games.

The pendulum has now swung the other way. "Athletics for girls" has become a school slogan—so much so that this athletic cult now appears to be in danger of being overdone.

In all the States the problem of competitive outdoor games, with the demands they make on the pupils' time and strength, is receiving earnest attention. It is feared that in many girls' schools sport is becoming too serious a business altogether.

IN most of the girls' secondary schools the sports programme is as full and comprehensive as that arranged for boys. Tennis, basketball, hockey, skipping, running, swimming, teams races, relay races—all these, and others, are in the athletic bill of fare. In addition to inter-school matches there are outside tournaments, particularly tennis tournaments, arranged for school-children.

Many teachers are asking themselves whether it is not too much!

Reduction In N.S.W.

THE first move for curtailment of girls' sport has been made in New South Wales. Headmistresses of the girls' secondary schools in Sydney, twenty in number, have decided that next year sport shall be less of a business.

There will be a reduced programme of matches, arranged on a different basis, with the competitive element lessened by doing away with the presentation of cups and trophies.

The curtailment will be welcomed by the majority of parents, especially by those who realise how exacting the sports programme has become. The headmistresses, as a body, feel that the emphasis placed upon the competitive aspect has given rise to an unfortunate mental attitude towards sport in general.

Overstrain

WHERE formerly matches between schools were eagerly looked forward to as social events, they are now regarded more as a business. There is a fear, too, that if the competitive element becomes too strong the pleasure of the game for the game's sake will be lost.

There have been many instances of girls playing on occasions when they were not fit to play, and doing themselves physical harm because of the idea that everything depended on them, and they mustn't let the team down.

Some of the headmistresses, aware of the dangers of overstrain, were in favor of suspending competitive fixtures. The majority, however, were agreed that trial should be made of a limited programme.

Victoria and S. Australia

IN Victoria and South Australia there has been great development of sport for schoolgirls, just as there has been in New South Wales. This applies to both primary and secondary schools. In Victorian primary schools they have gone to lengths that were never dreamed of ten years ago. There they have competitive games divided into groups, some

Less School Sport

... in 1935

HEADMISTRESSES of girls' schools in New South Wales have already decided that in 1935 there will be a reduced programme of school sports and athletics. Will school authorities in other States follow this example?

for summer and some for winter, and, in addition, there are athletic sports such as running, skipping, team games, and relay races. There are sportsmasters and mistresses in both primary and secondary schools, and their job is no sinecure.

In the more bracing Victorian climate athletic sport for girls can be carried further, without harmful result, than in Sydney or Brisbane. But even in Victoria they are inclined to call a halt.

The secretary of the Victorian Headmistresses' Association (Miss Kirkham) told *The Australian Women's Weekly*: "We have done something to eliminate the strain of competitive matches, which were becoming too numerous. The result has been quite definitely beneficial, both from a health and an educational point of view. The headmistresses as a body are determined not to allow sport to interfere with mental development."

So far there has been no pronouncement on the subject from South Australian headmistresses, but they are



A TYPICAL SCENE at a school sports gathering. It is contended by some authorities that the importance attached to success in athletics diverts attention from studies and imposes too great a physical strain on the girls.

watching the position in the light of what is happening in other States. There are fewer competitive matches in Adelaide than in Sydney or Melbourne, and the demands of sport on the girls' physique are less exacting.

In Queensland

IN the last ten years Queensland has given a lot of attention to the question of athletic sport for girls, and in Brisbane there are now inter-school trophies for tennis, basketball, athletics, hockey, and swimming.

Until recently they even had jumping events in girls' secondary schools, but these have been banished because of the decision, supported by medical authority, that this class of event was harmful to the girls' physical development.

Despite the muggy climate, or perhaps because of it, the Queensland schoolgirl thrives on outdoor exercise, and there

have been no complaints as yet that the sports programme of either primary or secondary schools is overdone.

Dr. Welch, Chief Medical Officer for the Queensland Education Department, has expressed the opinion that the typical Queensland girl is a "remarkably fine type of young womanhood," and he attributes this in no small measure to school games and sport.

ENGLISH Tennis Stars Help OUR JUNIORS

In this article, Miss Joan Hartigan, our foremost woman player, pays a handsome tribute to the visiting Englishwomen and has a word to say about some of the men.

By JOAN HARTIGAN

WE will be very sorry to bid farewell shortly to the English tennis girls.

The tennis public of Australia must have been deeply impressed with these fine exponents of the game, and they certainly have been a lesson, both on and off the court, to our young players. It would be impossible for any country to find three more charming, unassuming, and more charmingly unassuming players than these English girls. They play the game well, thoroughly enjoy it, are always dressed neatly, and whether winning or losing they still maintain that sportsmanship which makes them outstanding as a team.

Recently in Melbourne when conditions were anything but pleasant and they were asked to move from the Albert Ground, where the courts were very fast, to Kooyong, which had not been played on for weeks, they made no complaints, but expressed sympathy with the committee in their misfortune and expressed themselves willing to fall in with all arrangements.

The team left Melbourne on December 20 for Tasmania to play exhibition matches and was to be back again to spend Christmas at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Norman Brooks at Frankston. The girls expressed disappointment at not seeing more of the sights of Sydney, but, with such a limited amount of time, this is mostly the drawback to visiting teams. They really see very little of our country.

The girls thought a lot of the game played by many of our juniors, and with two such players as Thelma Coyne and Nancy Wynne of Victoria it should not be long before we should have a team equal to that of any team in the world. The girls were amazed at the standard of tennis played in the final

of the junior singles in Victoria, and I certainly have never seen junior tennis equal to it in any part of the world.

Dorothy Round must be more than delighted with her successes, so far having gone through without losing a single match. I cannot see anyone likely to defeat her in the coming Australian Championships. She has gone right through both the N.S.W. and Victorian Championships without losing a set. Misses Dearman and Lyle have suffered only one defeat when Mrs. Westcott and I beat them in the international match. This was hardly a fair test, as they had not had time to get accustomed to our courts and conditions. In the N.S.W. and Victorian Championships they have gone through both without losing a set.

Mrs. Harper deserves a word of praise for the way in which she played in the final of the Victorian Championships with Miss Round. She played splendidly in both sets and held her own well in all the driving rallies.

After the success of this team, I feel sure it will be the forerunner of many more.

Fred Perry's Form

LAST week the scene was shifted to Sydney, and the men had the International matches to themselves. I saw the match between Perry and Quist in Melbourne, and was surprised, like everyone else, at the result. Quist played extremely well, but Perry, for once, seemed all at sea. The soft and uncertain court was largely responsible, but apart from that Perry was not himself.

OPAL RINGS from 7/6. See E. E. Smith at "The Opal Mine," 113a Pitt St., near Hunter. St.***

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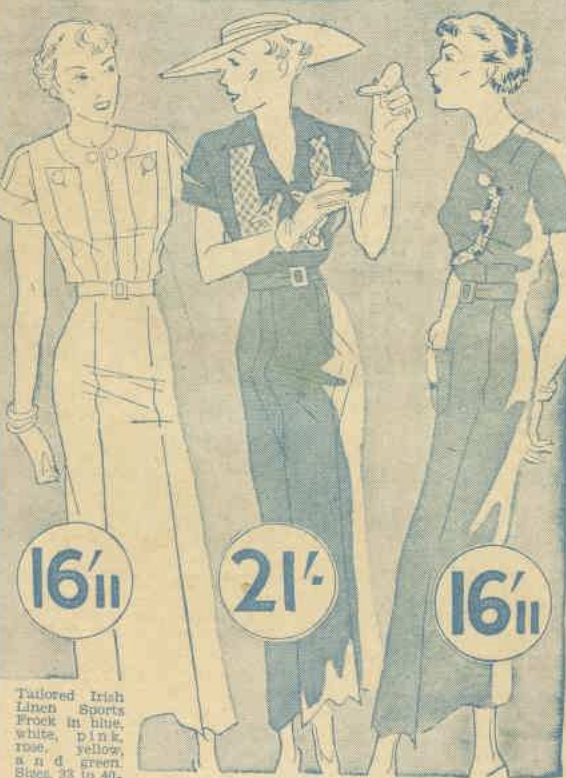


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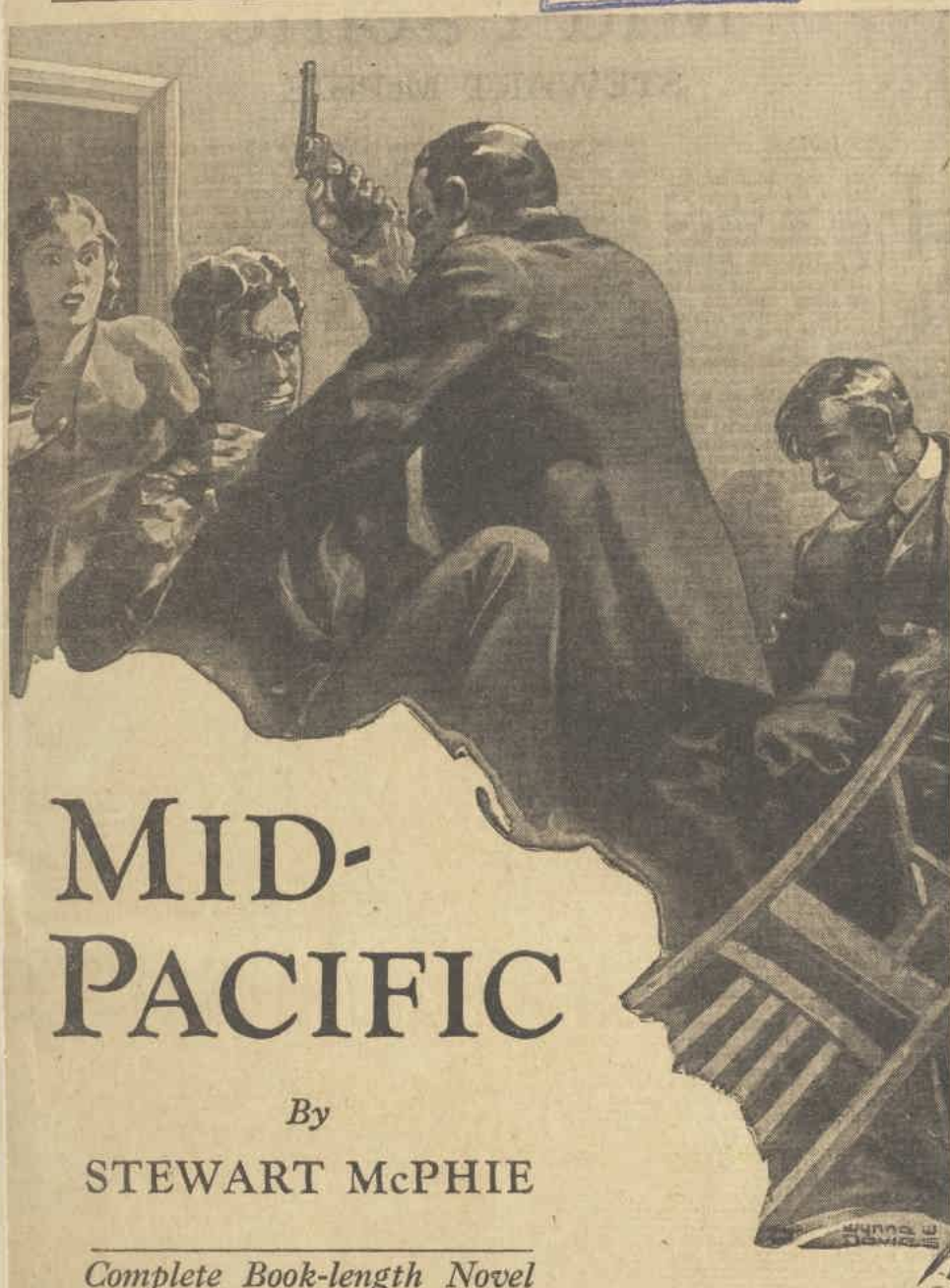
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PROLOGUE



It was very still on the harbor, and very dark. The boat lifted gently to a slight swell, sending out little phosphorescent waves with each rise and fall. The bulk of a liner rose sheer above, losing itself in the gloom. From the city, carrying far in the still air, came the boom of the Post Office clock announcing midnight. Then again silence, broken only by the lap of the water.

The Kid rose stiffly from his seat in the bow of the dinghy and stretched himself cautiously. It was time. He called softly to the Frenchman, who was squatting, a humped-up shadow, in the stern, and then, satisfied that the other was awake, whistled, very low, a couple of bars of song, ending with a quaint little trill. They heard an answering note from the liner's deck, and again stillness. After what seemed hours of interminable suspense the straining eyes of the Kid saw, descending from the dimness overhead, a small parcel. Waiting until it came within reach, he secured it and passed it to the Frenchman, who stowed it carefully under the thwart. The cord disappeared upwards, drawn by the same invisible hand that had lowered it. Several times it came down and was raised, the Kid passing its precious freight to the Frenchman. No word was spoken, and yet the very silence was ominous. The strain began to tell on the Kid, who sent urgent requests to the presence above for haste, more haste.

And then it happened.

From the blackness surrounding them shot a blinding gleam, wavered for a moment, and then settled, making white the side of the ship and throwing into prominence the two figures in the boat; the Kid with his hands to his eyes, and the Frenchman stooping, in the act of packing the last tin. A flicker, and it was out, leaving a gloom more impenetrable by reason of its presence and departure.

On the liner a revolver snapped. Someone screamed shrilly and a body hurtled through the air, entering the harbor with a splash that threatened to swamp the dinghy.

The Kid did not wait, but dived, leaving his companion cursing fluently. The light flared out again, and a voice from the police-boat called on the Frenchman to give himself up. In a flash the Frenchman was in the water, swimming to where the Kid was clinging to the weedy piles of the wharf.

They hung there for a moment, debating as to the best course to follow. The Kid wanted to make for the shore, but the foreigner was for climbing the beams of the wharf and trusting to luck to escape detection. As they argued, the beat of oars was getting louder and louder, until at last, in desperation, the Kid let go his hold and struck out for the steps, leaving the Frenchman to follow or not, as he wished. He followed, betraying their whereabouts at every stroke he made.

The Kid cursed violently. He didn't know why the crowd had let the Frenchman into this opium deal at all. It was Udall's fault.

He encountered the stone stairs at the shore. Climbing up he gazed around him, vaguely at first, until, with a flash of the torch, the full realization of his plight

dawned upon him. It was useless to hide. No! There was only one thing to do—run for it. And now the Frenchman was near the steps, splashing violently. The Kid damned him bitterly, as, stooping down, he dragged the other to land.

"Scoot, you cow—and stick to me!"

The Frenchman nodded blindly, and they set off.

Down the lane in which they were then, all was darkness, but, as they emerged into the open street, the glare of light seemed dazing, so dazing that the two involuntarily drew back again into the shadow.

Behind them sounded the shrill scream of a police whistle. There was no alternative—they must risk the open. The Kid led the way, and, throwing caution aside, ran for it. The Frenchman followed, running blindly. Fortunately the streets were deserted, the lateness of the hour and the locality explained that; but it seemed that everyone in the neighborhood must be aware of their flight, for whistles were sounding insistently, and the Kid in a hurried, back-flung glance saw three burly forms pounding in their wake. Behind them a shot rang out.

The lanes in which they were now were much darker. Lights were few. On each side were dim, disreputable dwellings. The light of a flickering gas-lamp showed squalid and filthy road gutters, littered with tins and papers. Elbows in, hearts pumping as if to burst, they stumbled on.

The Kid realised there was only one thing to do. A glance at the Frenchman convinced him. The latter was nearly all in. The swim, followed by the long run, had proved too much. They must make a stand. And then, for the first time that night, fortune favored them. The street they were following was narrow and turned abruptly to the right. Just at this turning was a church, small and tumble-down, the windows broken, but with the porch running out to the footpath and leading to the door. The Kid realised its possibilities at a glance, and without a word swung the Frenchman into its welcome darkness. Their pursuers were not in sight. A word sufficed for the Kid to explain to his companion, and then, breathing heavily, they crouched there waiting.

All was silent.

At last, faintly at first, came the thud of running feet. The deserted street seemed to echo with them. Now the two in the porch could hear the thick, panting breathing of the runner, heard the smothered curse as he stumbled over some scattered refuse. Both were leaning forward quivering and ready. The Frenchman jumped. His arm rose and descended. A thud and the two were standing over a hunched-up form on the pavement.

The Frenchman contemplated his handiwork with satisfaction, but the Kid, suddenly weak, leant against the wall and felt violently ill. He looked round him with the air of one trying to get his bearings. Their run had brought them within five minutes' walk of the gang's rendezvous. Too near to be pleasant. For one thing they could not leave their victim in the street. That would mean a search of the neighborhood and—well, they couldn't afford that. This aroused another thought. Was the policeman dead? He put the question to the Frenchman, and together they knelt over the motionless thing there in the shadows of the church. The Kid undid the shirt

and felt over the heart. No! Still alive. The Frenchman gave a deprecating cough as if to excuse himself for not doing the job better. The Kid thought quickly. There was only one thing to do. They must drag the unconscious man with them and see what the rest said about disposing of him. The Frenchman agreed, and, lifting the limp form as well as they could, they left the gloom of the porch.

The journey seemed to take hours. Every moment they expected to hear the loud demand to stand. They turned down an alley-way. Five minutes? It seemed that they had been carrying that load for five hours. At length they stopped before an old cottage, the windows shuttered, gloomy and forbidding. The Kid stepped to the door and knocked. A light showed out suddenly from an open panel, illuminating the pale faces of the two outside.

The door opened.

No word was spoken, but the Kid and the Frenchman stepped inside and dragged their burden with them. The door closed, and there came the noise of a bolt being shot. There was no light, but both knew their way well enough. Along the passage-way, down three steps, another door opened.

They stepped, half-blinded by the sudden radiance, into a small, low-ceilinged room. It was strange to note the effect their sudden entry had upon the several occupants. In the corner, a huge man with a shock of flaming hair, Patay, stood gaping with astonishment at their wet and done-up appearance. Short, squat and misshapen, Billy the Toad crouched, the lamp-light throwing flickering shadows across the dead white face that was known, and dreaded, in all the worst dives of Australia. Gilbert the gentleman, the kid-glove expert, tall, slight, and refined-looking, raised himself on one elbow from the floor. Udall alone retained his self-possession, that impassivity which had raised him to the position in the underworld which he now enjoyed. Udall spoke—one word only.

"Failed"—it might have been a question or an accusation.

The tension was broken. The Frenchman broke into a torrent of words, half English, half French, gesticulating excitedly, explaining nothing.

"Shut up," said Udall and turned to the Kid.

"Well—what have you got to say?"

The Kid explained.

"We took the launch round at the right time and got most of the stuff on board. Then someone loosed off a gun somewhere on the boat. Reckon it must have been Ah Gow. At any rate a bull was done in; we heard him flop into the harbor. Then the police boat came and we had to beat it and leave the dope. They chased us but we slipped all but one. He followed and we got him—close to here. Had to drag him along; nothing else to do."

Udall swore softly. Although he showed nothing of it in his face or bearing, the chief was raging. A night of disaster; over a thousand pounds' worth of opium lost, and then this; this enemy brought to their hiding-place. Gilbert was on his knees, opening the constable's shirt. After a short examination he stood up.

"Udall," he said, "the bull's not dead and—he'll be awake before long."

The Kid felt a sudden feeling of relief, a lightening of the burden that had weighed him down since that moment when he had

seen the Frenchman exulting over the dark mass on the pavement. Udall was summoning them all to the table to decide what was to be done.

They sat down, the six of them grouped around a small table in the centre of the room. The only illumination was that provided by a small kerosene lamp. On first entering, after the darkness outside, the light had been almost glaring, but now the apartment seemed to be steeped in shadows—grotesque, leaping shadows that danced to the will of the flickering lamp. Udall, turning to Gilbert, was the first to break the silence.

"How long will it be before he comes to his senses?"

Gilbert considered, and then—
"Pretty soon," he said.

"The hell you say—you'd better fix him, Patsy."

The giant rose obediently and moved to the door. The others watched him intently as he dragged the sagging figure from the gloom of the passage-way and bound and gagged it. He performed his task without a word and again took his place at the table. Udall wasted no time in beating around the point. He put the question bluntly to them all.

"We've got to make up our minds what to do with the John; decide before he wakes up. You all know as well as I do what happens if he sees us and then gets away—we're done, that's what. Well, think about it for five minutes."

He drew a watch from his pocket and placed it before him calmly. No one spoke. Each was deciding in his own mind how to speak. The Kid leaned back in his chair, his brain whirling. They couldn't do a man in in cold blood. The thing was cruel, cowardly. Yet, if he held out against them all, his place in the gang was gone, and, moreover, he might accompany the policeman on a last long journey.

Curiously he scanned the faces of the others. The Frenchman was seated opposite. He looked deadly, sinister, his black eyes narrowed, lank hair hanging over a low forehead, and fingers clutching nervously at the knife at his hip—death written in every line of his tense, crouching body.

The Kid's eyes moved to Gilbert, who sat somewhat away from the table, in the shadow. His long fingers were playing ceaselessly with a box of matches upon the table, turning, re-turning, never still. In the dimness his face to the Kid appeared furtive, frightened and uncertain.

No need to glance at Billy the Toad, squatting there, with the uncertain light throwing shadows over his damp, white skin, giving it a mottled-grey appearance. His heavy brows were drawn down until his eyes appeared only as pin points. Flabby cheeks flanked a toothless mouth. He was the human embodiment of the creature whose name he bore.

Patsy sat stolidly. He had but only one thought, to please his chief. Udall returned his watch to his pocket.

"Time's up," he said. "you've had five minutes to make up your minds—well, Frenchy?"

The Frenchman spoke without stirring—"Kill," he said tensely.

Udall nodded.

"Billy?"

The Toad looked around the table.

"Kill him," he said, "and I only wish—"

Udall interrupted:

"Never mind that—You, Gilbert?"

Gilbert started nervously, his hand went to his collar.

"No, no—not murder"—he stopped, seeming to feel the malevolent looks directed at him by Billy the Toad and the Frenchman. Gilbert seemed to shrink under them.

"I—I, that is," he faltered, and then

after a long interval, "death," he whispered, and collapsed into his place.

Udall grinned and turned to Patsy, questioning him with a look. Again the reply, "Kill him."

It was the Kid's turn to speak. All were looking straight at him, burning glances that seemed to pierce his brain. After what seemed an age the chief spoke casually.

"What do you say, Kid?"

The Kid gathered himself together for the great effort of his life. His mind was made up. He must go against the gang. He could not sit and see cold-blooded murder done. Shuddering at the thought, he prepared to speak.

Suddenly there was a knock at the door.

Nobody in the room stirred until Udall, with a sign to Patsy to put out the light, crept silently to the door, his gun ready. Gilbert and Billy took up positions on each side of him, while the Frenchman stood slightly to the rear, a knife glittering in a ray of moonlight which had strayed in from the skylight.

The Kid had moved to the unconscious policeman, and, by exerting all his strength, managed to drag him to the far end of the room and cover him with some old sacks.

Udall flung open the door. Someone flashed a torch. A yellow face, gleaming with sweat and distorted by exertion, peered in from the darkness.

"Ah, Gow, by God!" cried Gilbert.

They helped the Chinaman into the room. He also had been pursued, and he had only made the cottage after a hard run. He brought worse tidings—a suspicion that the hiding-place was known to the police.

The chief swore viciously and turned to the Kid.

"Where's the 'John' you brought in?" he asked.

The Kid indicated the heap of sacking.

"By God! We'll put him where he won't tell anything."

A hoarse murmur of assent came from the Frenchman and Billy the Toad.

Udall beckoned, and, after a whispered talk, the Frenchman sidled towards the end of the room, his knife in his hand.

Something snapped inside the Kid's brain and he sprang in front of the Frenchman, grasping an iron bar he picked up from the rusty fireplace.

"Keep away, Frenchy!" he said, and then to Udall, "You can't do him in like that, boss. He can't harm us—we're pinched at any rate."

Udall eyed him evilly.

"Stand aside, Kid!" he shouted, "Out of the road, or by God you'll go with him!"

The Kid stood firm, idly swinging his iron bar. The Frenchman stepped back, squinting evilly at him. Gilbert, Patsy, Billy the Toad, and Ah Gow were clustered behind Udall, staring in astonishment.

The Frenchman sprang like a leopard, but the iron bar came down, narrowly missing his head, and smashing with terrible force on to his shoulder. He lurched aside, and crashed, sobbing, into the table. The lamp fell, flames shooting up as it broke on the floor. Someone, the Kid thought it was Patsy, beat them out with a bag.

It was very dark, except in the corner where the senseless man lay. The moon was now right overhead, and shone down through the glass in the roof upon the sacking which covered him.

The Kid backed slowly until he, too, was in the clear silver light. It gave him nerve to carry on the fight. It had seemed horrible, somehow, to think of being knifed in the dark there. He felt curiously at peace, and not at all afraid for the course he had followed. He knew that Udall would get him, and yet the fact did not trouble him.

The moon seemed to be blinking down on him in a rather friendly spirit. Funny thing he—

His thoughts were interrupted by a stir

at the other end of the room. Something whirled towards him, flashed for a moment in the moonlight, and thudded into the woodwork at his back. The Kid crouched lower, and even as he did so they were at him like wolves. He had a confused idea of Udall striking at him with a bar, while Ah Gow leapt like a cat at his throat. Someone grabbed his ankles, and he crashed to the floor with Ah Gow still tearing at his throat. Boots crashed into his ribs. Dimly he saw Billy the Toad leaning over him with a knife.

There was a roaring in his ears like the sound of a heavy surf; his eyes seemed to be starting from their sockets. Another noise, like a battering at the door. But he could not be too sure; not too sure. He felt that he was going, floating somewhere, he did not know where.

THE court was crowded. People had waited from early morning to get seats. The Kid, pale and weak after three months in hospital, sat looking at the faces of all turned towards him in an un pitying stare. As the jury filed in the Kid's mind swiftly marshalled his chances. For the prosecution the most damning evidence had been given. Opium had been found in the gang's retreat. He, James Ernest Soutar, alias the Kid, had been found on the premises the night the police raided the place. Witnesses had been called to prove that he had frequented the cottage, and was an associate of Udall, Gilbert, and the others, all since tried and found guilty, and all known criminals. A man had come forward who had seen and recognised the Kid as he and the Frenchman were dragging the unconscious policeman from the old church to the cottage on the night of the great failure.

Against all this, counsel for the defence had brought forward the Kid's story of the fight in the cottage and his cause, urging that if the police had not arrived in time, the Kid would have forfeited his life in defence of the policeman. On the strength of this, and the Kid's youth, counsel asked for leniency.

"Gentlemen of the Jury, how do you find—guilty or not guilty?"

The Kid craned forward, his hands gripping his chair, staring intently at the foreman of the jury, and then—

"Guilty, your Honor."

He collapsed, weak and shaking. A sigh came up from the onlookers as the tension was relaxed, and all stared, steadily and un pityingly, at the broken figure in the dock.

Vaguely, the Kid heard sentence being passed. Two years—two long years away from everybody. He rose, as an official touched him on the shoulder, and stumbled out of the door.

The Judge was leisurely gathering up his papers. People moving towards the street were discussing the case, gesturing and inquiring as to the justice of the finding.

Somewhere in the bowels of the court a door slammed heavily.

CHAPTER I.

A COLD, bleak wind was sweeping the rain down on to Circular Quay, and out over the harbor in sleeky chunks. The big lights over the tram lines, casting their pools of radiance upon the wet, shining asphalt, swayed dangerously. A few pedestrians dashed hurriedly for their ferries, splashing through pools of water, heads down against the rain. Trams passed, the water hissing out from under their wheels, and a train of sparks falling blusly from the overhead wires.

The southerly gale howled down Macquarie Street, unimpeded by buildings, and the sheets of fine rain seemed to be tipped with ice. Here, at the entrance to the wharf sheds the weather appeared to have conquered. For the moment there was not

even a solitary hansom cab. Although a lamp burning over the entrance to one of the wharves, and the open gate, with a watchman crouched over a brazier, advised that a ship was lying just on the other side of the sheds, no seaman lurched along the roadway. The drinking dens and dives of Lower George Street and the Rocks would do a roaring business to-night.

A flurry of wind and rain, even more searching, came driving in under the eaves of the big sheds. What had appeared to be part of the black shadows at the foot of the wall stirred, and a man rose to his feet drawing up about his neck the collar of his threadbare coat. Water was running from the brim of his hat, and, as he moved cautiously to rectify the cramp that had attacked his legs, the sole of one shoe flapped against the ground.

He took off his hat, swinging it to get rid of some of the moisture that was dripping down his back, making him painfully aware of his lack of a shirt, and then started to shamble slowly from the punt, down towards the Quay proper. Instead, as might have been expected, of approaching the watchman and begging an opportunity to warm himself, and perhaps a shred of tobacco, he crossed to the other side of the road, and, increasing his pace, hurried past. Assuring himself that he could not be observed, he recrossed the road, and, hugging the sheds for what little shelter they afforded, sloped heavily on his way.

The wind came whooping triumphantly to meet him as he turned to the right near the Watson's Bay pontoon. He bowed his head to its fury, and staggered forward blindly. He had gone, perhaps, ten paces in this groping fashion when he thought he heard somebody call him from the narrow-railed platform that ran along the eastern side of the jetty. Involuntarily he stopped, and looked. Certainly there was someone there, sheltering in the best place available to escape the rain and wind. He could see plainly the dark mass of the body, and above the pale blur of a face. After a quick glance down the deserted Quay, and behind him he stepped on to the platform into comparative calm. He found himself confronting a woman.

It was not sufficiently light to ascertain much beyond this fact. She might have been old or young, cowering there away from the storm, but when she spoke again the tones were those of a young voice. Under different circumstances he might have thought of it as an attractive voice, deep-toned, and, in some unexplainable way, sincere.

"I want to know," she said, "if you can tell me where the schooner Alicia is lying. The man gave an almost imperceptible start.

"The Alicia?" he asked, and bent forward as if to examine his questioner more closely, but she shrank back further into the shadows. "The Alicia? Well, I think you'll find her lying at the wharf just around the corner. Yes, I think that's her. There's a watchman at the gate. You can't miss it."

"Thank you," said the voice from the shadows.

From the flat finality with which it was said, it was plain that she expected him to move off; but he was in no hurry to step out into the driving rain again. Instead, he leant against the rail, one hand still in his pocket, and with the other going through the gesture of shaking his battered hat.

"The Alicia?" he asked again. "Not going aboard to-night, miss, are you?"

The voice that answered him was now definitely steady.

"As it happens, I am. Now!"

Before he realised it, she was out of the shelter of the jetty and standing on the pavement, the wind tearing at her skirts, moulding them to her limbs, and holding

out her hand to him as if expecting him to take something. Automatically he advanced to accept what it was she offered, and as he did so she looked up at him. By the gleam of a swaying arc-light he caught a glimpse of a young face, already wet with rain, of eyes that searched his, and a small red mouth half-open in the effort to breathe against the force of the wind. Something dropped into his palm; a half-crown. He gazed at it stupidly for a second, then, realising that she had already turned to go, he caught her arm.

"Kind of you. My name's Soutar."

Before he could think how absurd it must have sounded, she was gone; the wind bearing away all sound of her steps. Left alone, the man hesitated, looking at the coin in his hand with a half-grin on his face. Suddenly a thought seemed to strike him. He pocketed the silver, and, instead of continuing towards George Street North, he turned abruptly and returned to the foot of Macquarie Street.

He gave the girl a minute or so, and then hastened in her wake, strangely silent in his progress, in spite of the loose sole that hung from his right boot. Approaching the gateway, he became more wary, once more moving to the other side of the road before getting up to the light. As he had calculated, the watchman was no longer by the brazier; he was guiding the girl on to the ship. Like a grey shadow, the man in the threadbare, torn clothes and gaping boots flitted across the road.

There is always an element of mystery about wharves at night. On a night such as this, when even the quiet waters of Sydney Cove were lashed into white-tipped waves, that sense of strangeness was deepened. The Alicia was a small, three-masted schooner, obviously an island trader, but, looming darkly against the heavy sky, she seemed twice her actual size; her masts, with their long heavy booms, seemed to scrape the low wrack of cloud, as she creaked against her fenders in the lift and fall of the wind-tortured harbor. Underneath the pointing finger of the jib-boom, the flare of shapely bows could be seen dimly.

Soutar examined her carefully from the darkness of a pile of barrels, behind which he was hovering. No sign of life showed about the fo'c'sle, but light came through the curtained portholes of the deckhouse amidships. Even as Soutar watched, the door of the deckhouse opened, giving, for a moment, an air of warmth and comfort. A man's figure stood dark against the glow of the lamp, his head turned, as if in conversation with somebody inside. Then the gale caught the door, slamming it violently, and leaving the man, who had come out on the rain-drenched deck, alone. A second later the watcher saw him straddling the schooner's side on to the wharf. The sound of his footsteps rang hollowly as he passed not five yards distant, huddled into his greatcoat, out towards the gates. It was the watchman.

Soutar gave him five minutes to settle down before moving. Then he slipped towards the edge of the wharf, bent almost double to minimise the chances of being seen. A quick glance around, with eyes that had become accustomed to the murkiness of the night, satisfied him that he was unobserved. With the quickness of a cat, he was over the schooner's bulwarks, up near the bows, and crouching on her decks, dry-mouthed and with heart beating a shade above normal. As if to assist him, the wind came on with redoubled vigor, bearing the rain with it in solid sheets.

Slowly, using infinite caution to avoid giving the least sign of his presence, Soutar crept down towards the waist of the ship. Once a piece of loose cordage flogging in the wind from the shrouds touched him furtively on the back of the neck, and his hand flashed to his pocket, only to be stayed in midair while he crouched, grinning wryly at himself. He heard a hundred obscure

ship's noises, the trickling of water out of the scuppers, the creak of gear, and the groaning of timbers as she jerked at the hawsers that bound her to shore. Somewhere aft a bucket broke loose and rolled clattering across the deck. This stopped his slow progress again. Somebody might come out to restore it to its place and stop any further noise. But nobody appeared.

Soutar was coming within the radius of light from the deckhouse now. Objects became more discernible. He saw an outsize in rats' fur sleek with the rain, eyes like big red pinheads, scuttle noiselessly across his path and disappear. Carefully he advanced until he was opposite the porthole, the curtains of which were not quite together. If he was to see what or who was inside, that gap in the hangings was his chance. Casting hesitation aside, and with one hand in that tense position in his right-hand coat pocket, he rose noiselessly. With one quick stride he was at the porthole.

At first he saw nothing but the white paint of the opposite inside wall of the deckhouse, and a half-section of the large oil-lamp hanging from the roof. His range of vision, owing to the narrowness of the chink in the curtains, was very restricted.

In an endeavor to see more he moved a little to the right. He was rewarded by the sight of the girl who had stopped him at the edge of the Quay. Although she had doffed her hat and coat there was no mistaking her; the face was the same, but in the full light of the cabin he could see much that had been unnoticeable before in the darkness. Her skin was of a soft, warm, creamy gold. Her lips were still parted slightly, and, between their red fullness, he noticed the whiteness of her teeth. Her eyes were blue and heavily lashed. But, perhaps, the most magnificent thing about her, as he could see her there, was her hair. The color of golden wheat, it lay massed in heavy strands on her head. Where her hat had not protected it, it was still rain-darkened, but elsewhere it rippled and shone like silk in the moving radiance of the lamp. She was apparently listening to somebody speaking, and, as Soutar watched, her face changed; she sneered, and with the downward twist of the corners of her mouth her whole aspect coarsened.

She leant forward, passing out of his range of vision for a moment; when she recovered her position she had lit a cigarette, and, leaning back against the deckhouse wall expelled a mushroom of smoke at the lamp. The action was the epitome of scorn. Suddenly she rose and stood talking excitedly. Even with the water dripping down his back and the wind tearing violently at his tattered clothes the man outside could not help admiring the way she carried herself, and the sweep of her limbs under the light, unseasonable frock she was wearing. Then abruptly, as if she had said all she had to say, she turned and took a step that carried her out of sight.

Unstirring, Soutar remained peering in at the porthole. All at once a male figure stepped forward into the area of vision. At the sight of him the figure outside on the deck stiffened, the hand in the coat pocket moved convulsively, the breath hissed out between clenched teeth. Just for about two seconds Soutar stood like that, and then the blood rushed once more through his veins, roaring in his ears. He relaxed, and went to draw away from the porthole. Even as he did so he thought he heard a slight noise behind him, a noise that was not part of the familiar uproar of the storm.

He spun round, his right hand coming up with something in it that glinted dully in the ray of light that pierced out through the gap in the curtains. He was an instant too late. He had just caught a glimpse of a dark, menacing form, of olivine gleaming wetly, when something heavy crashed down upon his temple.

He pitched forward to the deck without a cry.

CHAPTER 2.

WHEN Soutar next became conscious of his surroundings, the world seemed to have gone crazy. He was lying on rough planking in a narrow, low-ceilinged place, in which he would have found it difficult to stand upright. Chains seemed to be everywhere. The whole space appeared to be leaping madly, lifting and dropping with shuddering violence. His head was aching vilely and, feeling with shaking fingers, he discovered a large lump on his left temple. Before he could make any further investigations, or speculate on his whereabouts, a deadly nausea overcame him, and he was sick.

The paroxysm over, he lay weakly for a moment. Then remembrance came to fill in the details to account for his surroundings: the picture of wet decks, glowing deck-house portholes and a figure in oilskins with arm upraised to strike him down, flashed through his mind. There could no longer be any room for conjecture; he was somewhere on board the "Alicia," and she was at sea.

Another spasm of sickness attacked him. He was just recovering from this when a door in the bulkhead opened, admitting a tall, powerful-looking fellow in a thick jersey, that had once been cream but was now a repulsive grey, and trousers, plentifully stained with red lead, tucked into high rubber sea boots. A scar, that ran from under his eye to his mouth, was partially hidden by the grizzled stubble that bristled on his jaws and chin. This individual stood for a space scrutinising Soutar.

"Sick, hey?" he asked, in a rasping voice. He meditated glumly for a moment and then added:

"You've got to come and see the boss." Soutar noticed that he didn't say "the old man, or the captain, or the skipper." There must be someone else on board who was more important than the master. Recollecting what he had seen through the porthole of the deck-house, just before being knocked out, Soutar was not surprised. Weakly he tried to get his feet, but found this more difficult than he had imagined. Three days—it may have been longer—without food, followed by this racking vomiting, had left him without strength.

The man at the door saw his predicament, and came shambling further into the chain-locker.

"Come on, quit yer kiddin'. The boss wants yer."

With his help, Soutar managed to scramble out of that stuffy place up in the bows, out towards fresh air and, he hoped, some form of food that he would be able to swallow and retain.

After the half-light of the chain-locker, the brilliance of the sun and blue sky was blinding, when they stepped out on deck. Soutar guessed that it was about midday. The schooner was driving ahead of a strong southerly wind, sailing a north-easterly course. She must have cleared Sydney very early that morning, for Soutar could see no land. He decided that her skipper must be a good seaman; even assuming that the gale had abated soon after he had been laid out, it must have been a tricky business, piloting her through the Heads. Even now there was a big sea running; every now and then she'd take green water over her port bow, and the taut, bellying jib was dripping and dark with spray.

There was little time for him to observe much, however. The fellow who had come down to release him jerked at his arm.

"Come on. Ain't you ever seen blue water before?"

With his assistance, Soutar progressed slowly towards the deck-house that had been the object of his curiosity the night previous. At least, he assumed it had been

the night before. The door of the deck-house was open. Soutar stepped inside, and stood leaning weakly against the wall.

A round table occupied most of the room; on the wall opposite was a wooden cupboard, painted white like the walls. The curtains were of gaily patterned chintz—the only hint of color that was apparent, unless the dull, worn brown leather of a settee and three chairs can be called color. Simultaneously with his observation of all these details, Soutar saw the two men who were there waiting for him, one sitting upright on a chair, and the other sprawled at ease on the settee. He grinned somewhat wanly at the man on the chair.

"Well, well!" he said, his voice sounding thin and unsteady in his own ears. "Well, well; fancy meeting you!"

"Yes, just fancy!" the man on the chair said, adding dryly: "You'd better sit down, I suppose."

He pulled forward another chair with his foot and favored Soutar with a further few words.

"Before you fall down."

The man on the sofa uttered a snarling noise indicative of disgust.

"Huh, I should like to see him fall down; on his face; the rat."

It sounded queer after the calmness of the man on the chair, and the torrent of French with which it was followed up sounded queerer still. Soutar achieved another smile, and collapsed into the chair that had been pulled out.

"Still the same," he murmured. "You haven't changed a bit, French."

The man on the sofa answered with another outburst of Marseilles gutter slang. His companion turned on him sharply.

"Shut up! And keep your trap closed! I'm handling this."

He looked at Soutar again.

"So it is the Kid," he said softly. "Couldn't believe my eyes when they carried you in last night. Breaking stones doesn't seem to have changed you much. Yes it does, though; you're older; harder. They gave you a tough time, did they?"

His voice was quite pleasant, friendly even.

"Yes," Soutar said, his mouth hardening. "They gave me a tough time all right, Udall."

"I thought so," Udall said softly.

Then, abruptly, his tone changed: his voice took on a savage rasp.

"Well, that's all right. But what the hell were you doing crawling around the decks last night, eh? You don't seem to be over-surprised at seeing me and the Frenchman here. That's funny, isn't it?"

He was leaning forward in his chair, his eyes glaring into Soutar's, his knuckles white, so fiercely was he gripping the edge of the table. Soutar didn't stir.

"You might at least offer a man something, before you start third-degreering him," he observed quietly. "I've had no food for three days, and I've been sick down in that stinking black hole you chucked me into."

The Frenchman smothered an impatient curse, and jerked irritably on the settee.

Udall relaxed, eying Soutar thoughtfully, and then, rising, went to the cupboard, took out brandy and a glass, and poured out a generous measure. He handed it across the table.

"Drink that. You don't want water with it."

Soutar sipped it slowly. The fiery drink seemed to fill his veins with liquid warmth. Almost immediately the sick feeling that had still been threatening him disappeared. Gratefully, he drained the last drop, and put the glass on the table. Udall followed his every movement with eyes that looked for significance in each small action.

"Well," he asked, "what about it?"

"What did you expect?" Soutar countered. "I suppose I'm to throw a fit or something, just because I come in here this morning and find you two waiting to

give me the glad hand." His voice took on a sardonic note. "Especially since I've been spending all my time, since I woke up from that clout on the head, wondering what the hell you are doing here." He glanced ironically over at the Frenchman. "French wasn't a yachtsman when I knew him last."

The Frenchman scowled and half rose from the settee. Udall didn't even look around at him, but flung the words out of the corner of his mouth.

"Keep quiet. You stay out of this."

The Frenchman subsided again, muttering incomprehensibly.

"I see," Udall said silkily. "And just how did you know that we were on board?"

Soutar grinned again.

"Didn't the bright boy who laid me out tell you that I was near one of the portholes?" he asked. "If you don't want everyone to know you've taken to the sea, you ought to pull the curtains together. Or is that the steward's job?"

"Oh, is that so?" Udall said softly. His fingers were beating a tattoo on the table. "Is that so? So you were doing a little bit of spying all on your own, were you?"

"Well, you might call it that, but it wasn't exactly," Udall interrupted him with one of his sudden changes to savagery.

"And just how much did you see and hear?" he ground out. "Come on, the truth, or by God, I'll tear it out of you!"

Soutar did not lose his composure.

"Now, don't get wild about it. If you could've heard anything from outside in the racket that was going on last night you've got a damn sight better ears than I have. At any rate, I was only there a second. I saw a fair girl with a cigarette, and then you stepped over. Stone the crows, Udall! You could have knocked me over with a feather!"

"Is that all?" Udall demanded.

"The lot, so help me bob! I didn't see French here, but, knowing that you were about, I'm not likely to be surprised at seeing his ugly mug to-day, am I?"

"All right," Udall said grudgingly. "But that doesn't let you out yet, Kid. There's a lot I want to know before I'm satisfied. An ugly gleam came into his eyes. "There's a little bit of business about two years ago that I haven't forgotten."

"Well, you can forget it now," Soutar said in a hard voice. "I was young then, and soft. I didn't know too much about Johns then." His hand opened and shut convulsively on the table, and his face took on a lowering, deadly look. "Two years 'hard' makes a hell of a difference, Udall."

"So it does, Kid; so it does," Udall's voice was almost benevolent, but his eyes had lost none of their keenness under the lowered lids. "When did you get out?"

The question came like a shot out of a gun.

"Four months ago. But—it seemed that Soutar could not restrain a question himself—"what happened to you two? Ten years they handed out to you, didn't they? At any rate, that's what they told me when I was in hospital, waiting to be dragged up myself."

"Never mind about us. We'll talk about that later—perhaps. It's you we want to know about. So you came out four months ago, eh?"

Soutar nodded.

"What've you been doing since then? Things don't seem to've been too good with you."

His heavy-lidded eyes took in Soutar's ragged outfit, observed the lack of shirt, the tattered condition of the underwear, and dwelt on the sole of the shoe.

"You've managed to let yourself run down pretty well in that four months."

On the settee, the Frenchman cackled maliciously. Soutar flushed, and directed a venomous glance at him. When he answered his voice was louder, less self-possessed.

"I'd like to see how you'd look, if you'd

spent three months like the last three months I've put in. Yes, by God! I'd like to see you."

His tone became louder, almost hysterical.

"You're all right, you and French. Got friends all over Australia, who'll smother you up any time. You try three months without friends or money, hunted—"

He stopped suddenly, his jaw falling in dismay, as if he'd said more than he had intended.

"Yes," Udall prompted, in soft, deadly tones. "Hunted—"

The Frenchman had sat up, and was looking over at Soutar with excited, glittering eyes. Soutar kept stubbornly silent, his gaze on the deck.

"Name of a name!" the Frenchman said savagely. "Are you, then, dumb? Make him speak, Udall; there is something he is hiding."

The attack seemed to infuse fierceness into Soutar's weak frame. He sprang to his feet, and looked down on the Frenchman viciously.

"Who the hell told you to butt in? Think a lousy frog like you can force me to put my neck in a noose—?"

For the second time he realised that he had said too much. The brief tide of vitality that his excitement had conjured up disappeared, and he sank wearily back into his seat, burying his face in his hands. The Frenchman had jumped to his feet as if to leap, but Udall waved him back impatiently.

"So that's it," he said, his voice as low and undisturbed as ever. "I suppose this wouldn't have anything to do with it?"

From his pocket he produced a small black automatic, holding it out in the palm of his hand. Soutar did not take his eyes off the deck. Udall went on:

"So it had eh? That's funny, very funny. And you've been on the run for three months, have you? Three months; just let me think—"

He fell silent, gently tapping the butt of the automatic on the table. The Frenchman lay with his quick eyes slithering from one side to the other; Soutar did not look up. Udall came to life all at once.

"The Kingfield Highway affair, by God! How much did you get out of it?"

The question was like a shot out of a gun. Soutar's start, and the frightened, imploring look on his face, gave him away before he spoke.

"Nothing. It was an accident. I didn't mean to kill him. I tell you, Udall, the gun went off before I knew what had happened. . . ."

Udall smiled, and lifted his eyebrows incredulously; the Frenchman chuckled scornfully.

"Well, now we know so much," Udall said, "suppose you tell us all about it." He paused, and then finished meaningly, "Particularly how you came to be on board here last night."

For a moment Soutar hesitated, glancing sullenly first at the Frenchman and then at Udall. He was on the point of speaking, when somebody came to the door of the deckhouse, and stood blocking out the light. Soutar twisted round in his chair. It was the girl he had seen the night before. He could not make out whether the impression he had got of her through the porthole was correct or not; she was standing against the light and her face was indistinct. All he could confirm was the gracefulness of her carriage. She remained in the doorway, until Udall said:

"Ah, Val. Come on in."

He pushed out the remaining chair. The girl entered and sat down in a position that kept her face in the shadow.

"Go on, Kid," Udall said. "Let's have it."

Soutar made a gesture of protest.

"Why not send French out. And her." He nodded towards the girl, Val. "I don't want the whole world to be in on it."

"French is all right," Udall retorted. "So's Val; she's one of us. Come on, out with it. We don't want to be here all day."

"Oh, all right," Soutar said. "Got me in a cleft stick haven't you?"

He brooded heavily for a moment before continuing.

"Well, I came out four months ago, broke, except for the lousy few bob they gave me when they sent me off. It didn't last long; after you've been away in there for a while there's a lot of things you want to spend your money on."

From the settee, the Frenchman contributed a low, obscene laugh.

"At any rate, after a month I was flat; dead broke! I don't know any of the hang-outs in Sydney, except yours, and after the little party we had last time I saw you I didn't feel like going to any of those. Not that I thought I'd see you, Udall, or French; I thought you and the rest were still doing your stretch, but I was afraid you'd have friends who wouldn't mind paying a bit off your account. Things got pretty bad with me; I had no dough—nothing, except that."

He gestured towards the gun Udall was holding.

"I got that as soon as I came out; thought I might want it, if any of your off-siders saw me about. Well, to cut a long story short, I did a bit of nosing around, and lit on what looked a soft snap on the Kingfield Highway—an open-air picture-show. The cove who ran it used to finish counting his takings about half-past nine; then he'd lock it in the safe. I watched him a few nights; you could see right into the box-office from under the trees on the other side of the road. I never saw anybody else in the office. Anyhow, on the night, I got out there about nine. At quarter past he had all the coin piled up nicely in front of him, on the desk. I just walked over, and, before he knew anything about it, I'd pushed open the door, and was inside covering him with the gun. I remember thinking how simple it was. It was fine up to then. I was just making him put the money into a leather bag he had there when I saw him look up. Then I heard the door open again. I don't remember much about it after that, but the cove who'd come in must have been wearing sandshoes. The manager cove yelled 'Look out Sam,' and then both seemed to be on top of me. The gun went off in my hand, and the next thing I remember is being about fifty yards down the street, going like hell. I got away all right, but I didn't know till next morning that he was dead. The papers were full of it. You saw them?"

Udall nodded, his gaze fixed on the narrator. The Frenchman stirred restlessly; only the girl did not move. She appeared to be looking intently at Soutar, but, because of the way she was sitting, it was difficult to know with any degree of certainty. Soutar took up his tale again.

"Well, there's not much more. I've been on the run ever since. The other man, the one who'd come in and spoiled the game, gave a good enough description to put the wind up me. I've been frightened to do any little job for fear of being pinched and tied up with the—the business out at Kingfield Highway. Money ran right out about ten weeks ago, and I've been dossing where I could—Domain—anywhere. Food's been the trouble; I couldn't move about as easily as the other dead-beats. I swapped my togs to get a few bob to keep me going. . . . He looked ruefully at the miserable rags that covered him. "These weren't too good, even when I got 'em; they're a proper mess now."

The silence that fell on the cabin as he

finished speaking was broken by the Frenchman.

"Very, what do you call it—pitiful, no? But still you do not explain what you are doing on this ship last night."

Soutar shrugged his shoulders and made a gesture with his hands. He ignored the Frenchman, speaking again to Udall.

"I've been knocking about the wharves for a few weeks, begging food from the crews of any ship I've been able to get near. You see, they'd not be likely to've heard anything about the shooting, or to have read my description. I saw this schooner of yours berth, and one of the coves round the wharves told me he'd bet she was an island boat, come to Sydney with trade. He said she'd probably be putting out in a week or so for the islands; the Paumotu or the Marquesas, he said. It sounded good to me. I had to get away somehow, and the islands sounded just right; they say the natives will always give you a feed. Anyhow, I watched her loading, and sneaked on board last night with the idea of hiding till you got well away from land. I didn't expect to find you or French on board though. Stone the crows! I nearly fell over last night when I saw you in here. Take it from me, I'd have been away like a shot if somebody hadn't clouted me. That's about all, I think."

He stopped, and there was a deep silence in the cabin, only broken by noises from the deck outside; a man's voice singing softly somewhere up forward, the rattle of crockery in the galley, the seething rush of water, and the rapid flutter of canvas as the helmsman, apparently dreaming, let the schooner veer off her course, and split some of the wind from her big, swelling mainsail. A loud torrent of abuse followed this last; the old man or the mate, no doubt, giving his opinion of the pedigree of the man at the wheel.

Udall spoke.

"So it's you they want for the Kingfield Highway job. That's interesting. I wondered who it was. Nobody knew. I thought it was some bungling mug. None of the boys knew anything about it."

He looked at Soutar appraisingly.

"That cove, whoever he was, gave a fair description of you. He said you were fair, though; your hair's dark."

"Just as well he got something wrong," Soutar said. "He was near enough on my height and build. Didn't forget the scar, either!"

His fingers caressed the small, white scar that marked his forehead.

"No," Udall said. "It was a pretty good description from a man who must've been excited. . . ."

He mused.

"You're in pretty deep. We might be able to use you, Kid."

The Frenchman jumped to his feet, protesting loudly.

"Shut up, French," Udall said.

Soutar leant over the table excitedly.

"By God, boss! D'you mean that? You're not joking?"

He stopped, hands clasping and unclasping.

"I thought you'd still have it in for me because of that row we had the night they pinched us. But I tell you, there'd never be anything more like that. I learnt a lot while I was away. Give me a chance at a john now!" His eyes half closed vindictively. "Two years that cost me, and my pals. Straight though, is there anything doing?"

"There's always something doing," Udall said. "I said we might be able to use you, and we might. But don't forget you're wanted for murder—ugly word, isn't it? And French and I know it. You try any tricks and we'll hand you over to swing. You get that?"

"Don't worry," Soutar said. "What's the game?"

"Opium," Udall said, adding with a side-long look at the silent girl, "and other things. You'll know all about it, maybe, in good time, won't he, Val?"

"Perhaps," the girl said.

The Frenchman muttered something unintelligible, and jumped to his feet as the girl they called Val got up from her chair. She crossed the deck-house to go out, but Udall stopped her.

"Just a minute, Val. Might as well do the job all correct. This is young Soutar—we call him the Kid—an old clobber of ours. You'll be seeing quite a bit of him, maybe."

Soutar found himself looking into a pair of serious blue eyes that regarded him steadily. The girl was facing the light now, and he saw to even better advantage the warmth of her skin and the magnificence of the silky coils of hair. The lamp-light had not tricked him the night before; her hair was the color of ripe, golden wheat. They stood looking at each other for what seemed a long time, but was really a second, while the Frenchman fidgeted and muttered in the background. Then she nodded coolly, and stepped towards the door. She had reached it when the Frenchman, in two of his quick, catlike strides, was beside her. What occurred then took place so swiftly that it was difficult to follow. The Frenchman caught her arm just as she was going out, and drew her back against himself. Udall and the Kid saw his face come down towards hers as he bent to whisper something. Almost in the same breath, it seemed, her hand came up, the back of it smacking across his mouth. Before the two onlookers could recover from their astonishment she was gone, leaving the Frenchman standing in the doorway, cursing foully, and looking at the blood on his fingers from his cut lips.

Soutar was the first to speak.

"Seems to be pretty friendly with you, French," he said, grinning.

The Frenchman turned on him, his eyes glowing redly, his hand going to his hip. Udall spoke sharply.

"Slow it, French. We don't want to see your knife. Why can't you leave that dame alone, anyhow? One of these days you're going to get yourself into a hell of a mess with one of these women you're always chasing. Well, don't expect me to help you out."

The Frenchman scowled at him, hesitated, and then flung out of the cabin. It was characteristic of Udall that he made no further reference to the incident. Calmly he took a tin of cigarettes from a drawer of the table, extracted one for himself, and tossed another one to the Kid, following it up with a box of matches. The Kid lit his cigarette with shaking fingers, inhaled deeply, and then sent a band of smoke billowing towards the wall.

"This'll put me out if I'm not careful," he told Udall. "No food for three days."

Udall nodded impassively.

"The cook'll dish you up something. I'll get the captain to fit you up with some clothes, too. Those aren't much good for this sort of trip."

They smoked without speech for a few minutes; then Soutar said:

"I'm still a bit up in the air, Boss. I thought you and French were still in stir."

Udall smiled coldly.

"They never got us there. We were all tried together. After everything was over we were put in the same van to be taken away from the court. Billy and Patsy prised up the floor boards while the rest of us kicked up as much noise as we could. We dropped out before we were half way to Long Bay. The funny part of it was that we all got away, too. All except Ah Gow, that is. We scattered, but they caught him before he could get back to the city. They tell me he's working in the garden at Goulburn. Of course they had Buckley's hope of getting the rest of us once we got into smoke."

He stubbed his cigarette on an ashtray, and fell to examining Soutar's automatic.

"Are the others here, too?" Soutar inquired. "Patsy and Gilbert and the Toad?"

Udall shook his head.

"No; they've got their hands full in Sydney. That's why I can find some work for you."

He looked over at Soutar, fixing him with the cold, deadly, grey eyes the latter remembered so well.

"I think you ought to know your onions by now. You do what you're told and you'll be O.K. I don't think you'll turn dog again, but," his voice hardened, "if you do, you'll swing for it; unless," he added casually, "somebody puts a bullet into you, or cuts your throat first."

Soutar bore his scrutiny without flinching.

"Don't you worry about me," he said; "I've had my lesson. But what about the rest of the boys?"

"You leave them to me," Udall replied, with the ghost of a chuckle. "Anyhow, you won't see any of 'em for a while yet. We've got one or two things to do, before we get back to Sydney."

He rose, and said in the friendly tone he could adopt when he wanted to:

"You'd better get a feed. You look like nothing on God's earth. I'll take you to the galley, and give you a knock-down to the cook. We'll talk business, maybe, some time during the next couple of days. There's no hurry."

He waved towards the door and Soutar stood up. He felt his weakness now and the unsteady pitching of the schooner did not make it any easier for him to walk. Udall noticed and came over to help him.

"We'll have to put a bit more guts into you before you'll be any good to us," he said.

Soutar nodded and grinned. He made a note, as they stepped out on to the deck, however, that Udall pocketed the automatic, and made no reference to returning it. Apparently he had still a distance to go before he would be fully trusted.

CHAPTER III.

THE Alicia was three weeks out from Sydney. Two days before she had run into a dead calm, and now lay idly, tackle creaking, as she lifted to the slight swell, and booms swinging lazily. There was not sufficient wind even to fill the topsails. The crew lounged about the foc'sle head, or moved slowly about small personal tasks; a very mixed crowd—blonders, half-castes, and two whites, one of them the big fellow Soutar had seen on his first day aboard. There were eight in the crew, including the skipper, a tough-looking Scot, who claimed to have spent 25 years poking about the Pacific, and his mate, the latter as hard-looking a case as the captain, but younger.

Stretched out along the jib-boom, loafing, Soutar reflected that there seemed to be more than enough of them to handle a schooner of the Alicia's size. Not that he knew much about it, although the old man, who seemed to have taken rather a fancy to him, had been giving him lessons in seamanship since the second or third day out.

There had been little enough in the way of incident. Things had gone smoothly, but, in new surroundings, following a routine entirely strange to him, the days had not lacked interest. As a boy he had been fascinated by ships; living among the back dock streets of Woolloomooloo, he had for years seen come and go all the variety of craft that enters a large port, and had always wanted to know more about them.

Now that he was on the Alicia, he was satisfying this desire, learning all there was to know of her from gaff to keelson, from bowsprit to rudder post. MacQuirk, the schooner's skipper, who held that good helmsmen were born, not made, grudgingly praised the way his new pupil picked up the

"art;" Soutar seemed to know by instinct the humors of this craft, to which, so short a time before, he had been a stranger.

But his mind dwelt only fleetingly on the ship and the interest she had for him. There were other things far more important to him that needed chewing over. In all the time they had been at sea, Soutar had seen very little of Udall and the Frenchman. They had met at meals, and, occasionally, on the decks, when the evening coolness came over the ocean. Udall had been pleasant, and the Frenchman, if not exactly friendly, at least civil. The greater part of the time, however, the other two were together in the deck-house conferring, apparently, leaving Soutar to his own devices. He felt, though, that they were watching him closely.

Four days ago there had been a change. Soutar had just completed a trick at the wheel. Standing at the rail he was watching the Pacific seething past, when Udall had called him from the door of the deck-house, and beckoned him inside. What Soutar learnt from him there seemed incredible.

This was no petty job that Udall was taking him in on. Not that Udall had ever been petty in his schemes, but the idea of the gang controlling an island ("just south of the Ellice Islands," Udall had said vaguely), which served as a clearing house for opium and other dope, was more than he had expected. By God, though! Soutar thought, Udall was a big man all right. Australia wasn't large enough for him; international opium running was the game now.

Udall had explained it all. There had been, so he said, trouble in getting the stuff in direct from the East. The Customs was getting very foxy; there wasn't a square inch of any boat from the East that wasn't gone over with a fine toothcomb nowadays. No matter where you tried to land the stuff, from Cairns to Melbourne, you struck the same trouble. Well, he'd given it a lot of thought, before he'd met a cove who'd guaranteed to be able to bring it down and dump it somewhere in the Pacific. Near Fiji, for choice, because his brig had regular business between Fiji and the South China ports.

The idea struck Udall as being good, particularly when he considered the possibility of bringing some of it down to Suva, and then re-shipping on a Sydney-Frisco boat. That could be arranged easily enough, and the beauty of it was that the Customs people in Frisco would not be looking for opium on an Australian boat, while the Sydney Customs would hardly suspect an island trading schooner of bringing opium in. The organisation would be a bit costly to run, perhaps. They'd have to buy some kind of vessel of their own, but the profits were huge. They'd pay less for the opium by cutting out a number of middlemen, and, finally, there was a wonderful market in San Francisco with its large Chinese community. Udall anticipated, in fact, extending his organisation right through the States, just as he had in the main Australian cities.

The conception was tremendous, but Soutar could see no reason why it should not be carried out. Actually, it was being carried out, according to Udall; at least, the Australian end of it. The gang had acquired a trading station on a small island south of the Ellice Group, too unimportant for any of the large South Sea companies to bother about competing. They had a man in charge there, and the Alicia, after they bought her from a bankrupt island trader, called there regularly and took on cargo. This, incidentally, yielded a legitimate source of profit, in addition to providing the necessary camouflage for the real activities. A cargo of opium had already been landed successfully in Sydney.

Udall and the Frenchman were aboard this trip in order to try and finalise ar-

rangements in Fiji for the Frisco end of the business. They had their men on the boats, which would carry the stuff, but it was necessary to appoint somebody to look after things in Suva. That was where Udall planned to use the Kid. He had been worried about that part of it. At first he had thought of putting either Gilbert or the Frenchman there, but Gilbert was wanted in Australia, while the Frenchman—mentioning him, Udall had grimaced: "Can't trust him out of your sight unless it's somewhere where there's no woman within a hundred miles."

There were difficulties, too, in the way of leaving it to a man you didn't know. You might wake up one morning and find the whole thing up in the air and the bracelets on your wrists. Now, with the Kid there, Udall insinuated, he'd feel safe because, if the Kid took it into his head to blow the gaff he'd be handing himself over to the hangman. Things couldn't have fallen out better. Soutar, hearing this, had nodded thoughtfully; he understood now why Udall had been so forbearing. Not the latter went on to say, that the Kid wouldn't be treated right; he'd get his cut, just the same as the others, but it would be just as well for him to remember that any slip like the last one would mean a taste of hemp for him. Did he understand? Soutar had intimated that he did, thoroughly.

They had left it at that, Udall telling him, as they smoked a cigarette, that they'd go more into the details of the business when they reached "the island." In the meantime, the Kid was to think things over and make any suggestions he liked.

Lying out on the jib-boom, the big expanse of the jib shading him from the sun, Soutar was engaged in following Udall's suggestion, thinking things over. So far he had not hit on any suggestions that promised in any way to be advantageous. He told himself that ideas would occur to him when he saw the way the job was being handled on the island, and, above all, when he reached Fiji, and looked over the position there, where he would be working. In the meantime, there was another matter that was perplexing him—the girl, Val.

Questioned about her, Udall had said she was running a game of her own that fitted in well enough with theirs: cocaine and morphine—in fact, any sort of drug. Gilbert had brought her along to them. According to him, she had a pretty good connection in Australia, but was having the usual trouble getting supplies in.

She could get the stuff all right in America; the trouble was landing it. That was where Gilbert thought they could come into it. Her dope could come to Fiji in the usual way, be dropped off there and then brought on to Sydney on the *Alicia*. The gang would get a good rake-off, and Val—Val Blakely, Udall said her full name was—would be able to keep her people supplied at very little extra cost to herself. At all events, she could easily pass on any extra cost. The main thing was to get the stuff.

It would work all right for a while, Udall said, until they got their own business running smoothly; his shrug, and the hard, sardonic smile that accompanied it, implied that, when that happy state of affairs was achieved, the gang might consider extending its scope. Then Miss Val Blakely's organisation might very well be taken over by more experienced hands. In the meantime, there was no objection to her coming out and making her own arrangements at Fiji. As a matter of fact, now that things had turned out as they had, Udall would suggest to her a bit later on that the Kid should act for her in Fiji, as well as for his own crowd. A good idea . . .

Pondering over the matter, and gazing absently at the green ripple of the sea at the schooner's forefoot, Soutar found it

difficult to believe that this girl, like Udall, Gilbert, himself and the rest, was an outlaw. Meeting her and not knowing anything about her, nobody would ever have tipped her to be crook. There was something about her that didn't go with that sort of thing; her eyes, maybe, or her erect, unafraid carriage, or perhaps the deep sincerity of her voice; it was hard to say what it was. There had been a moment when she had looked what Udall said she was.

Soutar recollected her, smoking in the deck-house on the night he had crept aboard at Sydney. He saw again the way her face had changed, taking on a coarseness that seemed incredible now, when Udall or the Frenchman had apparently said something to annoy her. Oh, well, he'd no doubt learn more about her, too, in due course.

He was beginning to get a bit cramped and decided to go back to the cabin he was sharing with old Mac, the skipper, and Folstead, the mate, and get a more comfortable rest on his bunk. He slithered back to the fo'c'sle head and rose to his feet to find himself face to face with the girl about whom he had been thinking. She was leaning against the side, gazing ahead and, as he gave her a startled, somewhat embarrassed smile, she greeted him in a friendly enough fashion. Those of the crew who had been lounging about up here, had disappeared and she motioned him to her side, as if she felt talkative and was glad to have someone to speak to.

"That seems to be a favorite spot of yours," she said with a smile. "I've noticed you lying out there quite a lot."

"Yes, I like it somehow," Soutar acknowledged. "The sea looks lovely sometimes, looking down from the bows. Besides, a man wants to get by himself at times. Helps you to think."

"Yes, I suppose so."

They stood together in silence for a while, leaning against the bulwarks and watching the glitter of the rays of the declining sun on the slight swell. The lapping of the sea against the *Alicia*'s sides sounded very pleasant. Val was the first to speak again.

"Hullo; we'll move at last. See the breeze coming? Over there on the starboard quarter."

She pointed, and there, sure enough, Soutar saw the dark patch of ruffled water speeding towards them. It looked uncanny after two days' calm; it was not a squall, there were no clouds to herald it; it was just a breeze sprung up from nowhere. Tolsted, the mate, who was keeping his watch on deck, saw it at the same time and his bellow brought those of the crew, whose watch it was, leaping into activity. Soutar watched them at the sheets until the breeze hit them, and the *Alicia*, laying over a trifle, responded to it. Then he turned to the girl, admiringly.

"That was smart work, noticing that puff coming. Anybody'd think you'd been to sea before."

Her answer was unexpected.

"I have. My father was at sea all his life. He was sailing the Pacific when it wasn't the picnic ground it is now. I was born somewhere among the Friendly Islands, so he told me. My mother died then. Until I was fifteen I went everywhere with Dad. Then I went to Sydney to school. He was drowned at sea."

Soutar made sympathetic noises. The girl paid no heed to him; she had the look of one who is, for the moment, living in the past.

"No, this isn't my first voyage by a long chalk. If it came to that, I could sail this schooner well enough to get by and fudge a course by dead reckoning."

"Could you?"

Soutar's voice must have expressed some of the astonishment he felt. Val looked at him, as if realising that she had an audience for what she had meant to be private reflections; and then laughed.

"Yes, I suppose it is strange to have a girl you thought was a real landlubber making claims like that. But let's forget about me. How do you like sailing?"

"I like it. But I'd like to know more about it."

Even as he answered her, Soutar was trying to reconcile this new revelation with the girl's presence on board the schooner, and her reasons for being there. After a childhood like that, to be in this kind of game! It seemed absurd. And yet, you never knew; her old man may have been running some queer business himself.

"I think you're learning very quickly. I was watching you at the wheel the other day; you were very good. Some men never make steersmen, you know. They just can't do it. You're one of those who can."

"It's just a knack, I suppose," Soutar replied deprecatingly. "And there's a lot in liking anything, if you're trying to learn all about it."

"Yes," she agreed. "You've got to have some kind of incentive to go into anything thoroughly."

In the pause that followed this remark Soutar wondered again what was the incentive that brought her out here: money, love of excitement? It was hard to say. The sun was dipping down into the west now, throwing a broad, golden road across the sea, which all day had been glass-smooth, was now wrinkled with small white-capped waves. After the inertia of the calm, it was exhilarating to feel the *Alicia* slipping along, and to glance aloft at the gently-leaning masts with their burden of white, close-hauled sails.

Although he did not think so consciously, it was pleasant to be standing here with this girl by his side, silent, while the schooner sailed into the advancing night. There was a cool quietness, except for the creak of tackle, that isolated them from the world. . . .

She interrupted his reverie.

"Udall suggested that you might look after things for me in Suva. Did he speak to you about it?"

Soutar nodded.

Then her voice lost the seriousness into which it had fallen and acquired a more bantering, intimate note. It was strange how the change warmed Soutar.

"Perhaps I'd give you a lesson or two in seamanship at the same time. Or, maybe, you won't want to take lessons from a woman."

Soutar responded to the quizzical friendliness of her blue eyes.

"Well, it's against my principles, but, seeing who is making the offer, I'll accept."

Then, with an eagerness that surprised even himself:

"To-morrow?"

She laughed.

"What, unseemly haste. What about the Captain? He'll be upset if you desert him for a mere amateur."

"I'll take lessons from both of you," Soutar said, grinning.

"Well, we'll see how you feel to-morrow. I'm off now."

With a final smile she turned and went lightly down from the fo'c'sle head to her cabin, which, in the schooner's trading days, had been the supercargo's.

Something of her presence still lingered after she had gone. Soutar remained leaning over the rail, thinking of the conflicting sides of her character that this talk had revealed. Short as it had been, this period they had been together was the long-

est he had passed in her company; up to now she had been to him, as she had been to Udall and the Frenchman, coolly polite, but aloof.

Suddenly, he felt, rather than heard, someone approaching. He looked around and recognised, in the rapidly gathering gloom, the Frenchman.

"Hullo, French," Soutar said. "Come out to walk in the cool of the evening."

He knew it was silly of him—the Frenchman had no sense of humour—but he found it impossible to treat the man seriously, or to speak to him in anything but a chaffing manner. The Frenchman did not answer immediately but advanced softly, until they were face to face. His eyes were narrowed into slits and, when he spoke, it was in a low voice that startled Soutar by its concentrated hate and passion.

"You keep away, no?" the Frenchman said, without any preamble. "You mind your affairs and don't talk so much with my friends."

The Kid gazed at him blankly, unable, for a second, to understand what he was driving at. They had never been friendly, even in the old days, but this attack was beyond him.

"What . . . ?" he began.

The Frenchman advanced his face a bit closer. In the half-light it looked white; his mouth was set viciously.

"That girl," he said. "She is my friend—you understand? I do not wish . . ."

"You go to hell," Soutar said, understanding at last.

The Frenchman made a gesture around his throat with his finger.

"Some day . . ." he said significantly and then, as the Kid gave no sign of being impressed, he burst out:

"Merde! Me! I keep my knife sharpened for you. And the lady, I will tell her next time I am with her in her cabin, that I do not wish her to speak with you."

Even if the meaning implied by his words has been overlooked, his obscene gesture would have left no doubt as to what he was trying to convey. A sudden memory of Val Blakely as she had looked in the flush of the setting sun, swept through Soutar's mind.

"You dirty scum!" he ground out.

His fist caught the Frenchman squarely under the chin, lifting him off his feet and crashing him back against the opposite bulwark. He lay there for a moment, dazed, and then got slowly to his feet. His hand went round to the back of his belt and reappeared with a knife, held edge up; he had learnt knife-play, so he was accustomed to boast, in South America, where an upward, disembowelling rip is preferred to straight-out stabbing. Soutar watched him commence to slide across the narrow space that separated them, and calculated rapidly his chances of laying him out, before the knife could be used.

But the time for the settlement of the long-standing ill-feeling between the two had not arrived yet. Soutar had just prepared himself to meet the other's leap, when Udall's voice came from the deck below them.

"Drop that knife, French!"

Startled by the unexpectedness of the command, Soutar glanced down. He saw the black bulk of Udall's body and then, dimly, his face, as he drew calmly at the cigar in his mouth. The Frenchman muttered a curse, reluctantly sheathing his knife.

"Come on down here," Udall said. "Both of you."

There was no resisting the rasp of his voice. At the ladder, leading on to the deck, Soutar paused and waved his arm, significantly.

"You're first, French," he said.

The Frenchman scowled and descended. On the deck, Udall confronted them.

"At it again," he said in his cold way. He turned to the Frenchman. "That skirt, I suppose. Well, listen! Both of you! I'm not going to have any plans busted up for any jane. D'you hear? It suits me to have her here and to work in with her for the time being, but I won't stand for any trouble—get that?"

"That'll be O.K. with me, Boss," the Kid said.

The Frenchman grunted.

"And now," Udall remarked as if nothing had happened, "let's go and have a meal."

In her cabin, where she was having her meal separately, as she almost invariably did, Val Blakely was thinking of a certain night of wind and rain; of the fleeting glimpse she had caught of a man's face, when she had dropped half-a-crown into his hand; and of her feelings when she had seen the same man carried unconscious into the deckhouse. She recollected plainly the sharp feeling of pity she had experienced on seeing the tattered, dripping clothing and gaping boots. She contrasted the thin, white face she had looked at curiously then with the brown countenance, with its bold sweep of jaw, steady eyes and humorous mouth, she had examined to-night. A personable young man, she decided, although he didn't look the type who would handle too well the jobs that Udall was likely to give him. Not that she thought he lacked strength—either physical or mental—but there was just something about him that seemed to suggest that there would be limits to what he would do.

CHAPTER 4.

ABOUT noon, two days later, they sighted the island for which they were bound. Soutar was conscious of it at first as an indistinct grey smudge on the horizon that he would have taken for a cloud, only for the helmsman's loud hail of "land." It was Val who pointed it out to him, laughingly silencing his expressed doubt. They were together in his favorite spot, right at the bows, where, the day following their first real conversation and again to-day, they had gone for the promised lesson in the art of handling a fore and aft rigged craft.

The Alicia was tearing along off a stiff breeze, going over to it and toasting a mist of fine spray over her head, as she crashed into the choppy seas. Soutar and the girl stood silently and watched the land grow plainer, emerging greenly from the blue Pacific, until it was close enough for them to distinguish the glint of yellow sand, palm trees on a headland and densely covered, rising ground behind; the whole barricaded by a white line of surf.

MacQuirk himself had taken the wheel as they got closer in, and was now running the Alicia along parallel to the line of breakers. A native boy, perched on the jib-boom, kept his eyes skinned for the passage which would give them ingress to the lagoon. Udall and the Frenchman, who had come on deck at the first call of "land," stood scanning the shore closely, a little apart from the crew, who had lined the rail.

To Soutar and the girl, Val, the place was new. They took in every detail eagerly, noting the store, with its white-painted corrugated iron roofed sheds, just back from the beach, and the several canoes drawn up on the sand. A small crowd of natives had gathered on the beach but, strangely enough, they made no move to launch a canoe to come out. Stranger still, there was no sign of a white man, although Udall had said that he had a man there in charge. Soutar commented on this to the girl and she agreed that it was remarkable. As if moved by a common impulse, they left their position forward

and went down to join Udall and the Frenchman.

They found Udall uneasy. The lack of any sign from Headley, the man in charge, was worrying him, too. He said as much but agreed with Soutar's suggestion that possibly he, Headley, was two or three miles inland and hadn't had time yet to get back to the station. The Frenchman shrugged scornfully.

Udall said something under his breath and then asked MacQuirk in a loud voice, when he was going to get them into that damned lagoon. The skipper, without taking his eyes off the white tumble of breaking waves, raised one hand from the wheel, as if asking for patience. Even as he did so, the kanaka seaman, perched out over the bows, called "starboard!" and MacQuirk swung the schooner over, taking her skilfully through the fifty yard gap in the reef and then bringing her right up into the wind, within a short distance of the sloping beach.

The anchor chain rattled as the hook plunged into the calm waters of the lagoon, scaring the brightly colored fish. Under the lash of Tolsted's tongue, the hands were already at the halyards, taking down sail.

Before the big mainsail was half-way down the mast, one of the ship's boats was out over the side, manned by the two white members of the crew, with Udall in the stern-sheets. The Frenchman, Val and Soutar watched as the party reached the sand and approach the group of natives shore. They saw Udall jump to the dry sand and approach the group of natives on the beach. The conversation he had with them was brief; there was much gesticulation towards the house. Then Udall turned abruptly and started to walk swiftly towards the group of white buildings. The watchers on the schooner followed him, until he reached the verandah, where he stood for a few seconds as if calling somebody inside. He passed through the door and was lost to view.

On the Alicia a feeling of tension existed among those more closely connected with Udall's organisation. Even Tolsted, the mate, in the brief intervals allowed by duties of getting the ship snugged down, hovered about with a questioning look on his face.

Time passed slowly. The Frenchman, as was always the case when things did not appear to be running smoothly, became loquacious. He predicted gloomily that Headley had decamped, taking the last shipment of opium left at the island with him. Alternatively, he suggested that there had been treachery on the part of the natives.

"I ask you," he was saying to Val, "would not such a man be awaiting us, tout a fait enchante—what do you say?—with open arms, after a period so long without the society of other whites? Is it not reasonable, my suppositions?"

Before Soutar could be tempted to indulge in any satirical comment at the Frenchman's expense, Udall reappeared from the store and came hurrying down towards the boat. Even before, half-way to the water's edge, he stopped and hailed the two seamen. It was apparent that the forebodings felt by everybody would prove to be justified; something was wrong. Even the Frenchman was silent as the onlookers watched the three on the shore hurry back to the buildings and disappear inside.

In reality it was only a couple of minutes, although it seemed hours, before they came out again, the two sailors carrying somebody, Headley, no doubt, and Udall leading the way, occasionally turning to give a hand over the rough ground. They reached the boat, Udall climbing in and sitting in the stern-sheets. The other two, with that ominously limp form, waded out and, lifting it carefully over the side,

laid it on the floor boards in such a manner that Udall could support the unconscious man's shoulder and head against himself. They pushed off, and commenced to row back to the Alicia.

Nobody on the schooner was pretending to do anything but watch what was going on across the lagoon. The crew was clustered forward, gazing at the boat that was leaping towards them; Tolsted had joined Soutar and the other two; even old MacQuirk sauntered over in a detached sort of manner and lingered with them.

"Steady there," they heard Udall say, as the boat approached the schooner's side. "Don't jar her against the ship."

He hailed Tolsted.
"Hey, there, Mister! Get something ready to get this boat up. Just as quick as you please."

Staring down, Soutar saw the face of the senseless man Udall had brought back with him. It was shockingly white; bloodless. The body sagged; one would have said that life was gone, or on the point of going.

When the boat was swung up on the davits, there was a move on the part of the whole ship's company to crowd around curiously. Udall swore.

"Get to hell out of the way. No, wait, a couple of you. Give a hand to get Headley down to the deck-house. Come on, God damn you, are you paralysed? Mac!" to the captain. "You know a bit about looking after wounds. Go down and see what you can do. Headley's got a nasty bullet hole in his shoulder. Just managed to tell me all about it and then went all limp."

Four of the crew carried the wounded man to the deck-house, followed by MacQuirk. Udall remained on deck, striding up and down and gnawing savagely at his nails.

All at once he stopped, and addressed the three of them, speaking in a staccato, forceful manner.

"Headley was raided. Pulstrom arrived five weeks ago. Left about three thousand quid's worth of stuff. Yesterday, Headley says, a brigantine sails in. There's a Chow in charge of her. Crew the usual scam. This Chow goes ashore, as cool as you like, and tells Headley he knows all about the same and to hand over the stuff. The Chow has five of his men with him to back him up. Headley's on his own—the niggers have cleared. God knows how they always manage to smell trouble! But Headley's game, he keeps chatting to try and put 'em off their guard. Then he makes a break for his gun. It's hopeless, of course; the Chow was just waiting for him to do that and plugs him through the shoulder. Even if Headley'd managed to draw, he couldn't have done anything against the whole mob. Well, that's about all. They grabbed all the stuff and sailed straight out."

Udall stopped, and recommenced his quick, nervous pacing. Val and Soutar were silent; it seemed futile to say anything.

"Merde!" swore the Frenchman.
"God damn that cursed calm!" Udall burst out, losing the calm which, except in exceptional moments, always masked his feelings. "We'd have been here before them, only for that. Somebody on Pulstrom's boat must've been talking."

He brooded scowlingly and then, as if recovering himself, his brow cleared and the cold mask reappeared.

"But, by God! they won't get away with it if I can help it. Headley says that, while he was lying on the floor half-conscious, he heard them mention Fiji. It mightn't mean anything, but I'll lay odds they're sailing south to sell the stuff in Suva. They're only a day ahead. With a bit of luck . . ."

"You there, Mister Wei'ayername, Mister Tolsted. Get your men on to those sails. We're going straight out."

MacQuirk's dry voice came from the door of the deck-house:

"I'll trouble you, Mister Udall, not to give orders to my mate, on my ship. Mister Tolsted, you'll not touch a halyard."

Soutar's jaw dropped; MacQuirk talking like that to Udall, on the latter's own schooner! Val was smiling. Udall took a couple of steps towards MacQuirk, his fists clenched, an ugly look in his eyes.

"What the hell—?" he began.

MacQuirk waved his hand.

"Possibly ye'll no be aware that nobody on a ship gives orders about her sailin' to the mate, bar the captain. I'm no blamin' you, mind, ye're a landsman, but I'll thank ye, in future, to let me know your wishes, and I'll see them carried out. Besides, we'll no be sailin' out o' here. That is, unless ye're wishful of seein' the schooner piled on the reef and meself losin' me ticket."

He walked away calmly, giving orders to Tolsted.

"Get the boats over, Mister. We'll tow out."

Udall looked at his retreating back and then broke into a grin.

"Listen," he said, turning decisively to Soutar; "you'll have to go ashore and look after this place until we get back. Pulstrom's bringing back a small parcel of opium he's picking up at Suva. He heard of it last time he was there. Seized by the Customs a while ago, but one of the Customs men is willing to go to sleep for a few quid, while the stuff's pinched and put on Pulstrom's brig. Somebody'll have to be here to take it. We'll get this blasted Chow somewhere between here and Fiji; if we don't, we won't be too far behind him at Suva, and then . . ."

He left the sentence unfinished, but nobody had any doubt as to what would happen when Udall came up with the man who had been foolish enough to think he could get away with three thousand pounds' worth of the gang's goods.

"At any rate," Udall continued, "we should be back in a month at the most. Then we'll take you on to Suva."

Suddenly his eyes encountered Val leaning back against the rail. In his preoccupation with other matters he had not noticed her before. Now, seeing her, his face fell.

"Struth! Val, I'd forgotten about you. What're we going to do with you?"

He thought for a time, pulling at his underlip. When he spoke it was in his usual determined fashion.

"You'll have to go ashore. Can't have you on board with the chance of trouble with the Chow. You'd be in the road. Mind you, I think we're more likely to strike him in Suva, but that'd be worse. If there's a stink there and any inquiry I don't want you in it complicating things. No; you'll have to stay. There's plenty of room—you can have half the house to yourself. The natives'll come back now; there'll be plenty to do the work."

His gesture indicated that this arrangement could be taken as final, but, notwithstanding, the Frenchman jumped forward excitedly.

"I do not like these plans, Udall," he shouted. "I," he struck himself on the chest; "I shall charge myself to protect Val. A Chinnois, a pig of a Chinaman! What harm can come to her?"

Udall looked at him from heavy-lidded eyes.

"Who's running this show—you or me? I tell you, Val stops here. D'you think I'm thinking of protecting her? If she can't look after herself she shouldn't be here. But," he paused to let the following words sink in, "if there's trouble we'll have

enough to do explaining without having to think of a story for her. What the hell! D'you think they'd believe we're all away on a pleasure cruise on this packet? You poor mutt!"

But the Frenchman was persistent.

"All right," he said sullenly. "Cannot be," he shot a malevolent glance at Soutar. "Go with you. Me, I could remain to await Pulstrom."

Udall seemed to be controlling himself with difficulty.

"I don't know why I should give you any reasons, but the Kid is going to stay here because it'd be damned foolishness for him to be mixed up in anything at Suva. And now, damn you, shut up!"

The Frenchman opened his mouth to speak again, but Udall's threatening air cut short the words before they were uttered. Udall addressed Soutar and the crew.

"You'd better get your things together."

"That won't take me long," Soutar said with a grin.

"You'll find plenty on shore," Udall replied. "We can't wait to take on Headley's gear. Use it. He won't want it for a while," he added carelessly.

Gathering up two or three small articles he had accumulated during his few weeks on the Alicia, the Kid smiled at the turn his fortunes were taking. You never knew with Udall, he reflected, where you were likely to end up or what you were likely to be asked to do. In charge of a blanky island. He laughed out loud.

Ten minutes later he was sitting in the stern of one of the ship's boats with Val Blakely at his side, being rowed ashore. The last face he saw on the schooner as the boat was released from the falls was the Frenchman's. The Frenchman was hanging over the rail amidsthips. His expression was demoniacal. Catching Soutar's glance he spat viciously and flashed his knife, finishing with his familiar gesture of a finger travelling expressively around his throat. Unable to resist the impulse, Soutar waved a mocking farewell. The next moment he saw something flash through the air and thud into the floorboards at his feet. The sailor facing him ceased rowing, his oars in mid-air, his face the picture of astonishment.

"God's truth!" he said. "Where'd that come from?"

Soutar pulled the quivering knife from between his feet with difficulty. A quick look up showed him that the Frenchman had disappeared. Val leant over and took the knife from him.

"What . . . ?" she said.

"A parting gift," Soutar said calmly.

She looked at him quickly.

"The Frenchman?"

He nodded. They did not say any more until she thanked him for helping her out of the boat on to the beach.

As if by common consent, they did not go immediately to the house that was to lodge them both for the next few weeks, but stood watching the Alicia. The anchor was already up. Two boats' crews were straining at the oars to pull the schooner out through the gap in the reef to the open sea. She was moving slowly, and the two on the beach could see MacQuirk at the wheel. At last she presented her stern to them, moving more rapidly now that she had way on. A few minutes longer and she was outside, the boats hoisted, and the crew busy getting sail on her. Watching the jib go up and fill, giving her steerage way, and then the large area of mains'l creeping up the mast, Soutar realised that he was watching the departure of what might be the only link, for months, with the outside world. Strangely enough, the thought did not depress him; on the contrary, he felt a glow of exhilaration at the idea. Astonished, he cast about to ascertain the reason for this unexpected feeling.

He caught a glimpse of a fluttering dress at his side, and did not pursue his investigations further.

What Miss Val Blakeley was thinking was not apparent. When Soutar suggested moving off to inspect their new quarters her nod of agreement was nonchalantly friendly.

CHAPTER 5.

IN after years Soutar often declared that the perfection of these first three weeks was entirely due to Val Blakeley. From the moment they established themselves in the trading station, the girl adopted an attitude of unrestrained, natural friendliness. She thus provided the key to a companionship that was as pleasant as it might have been distasteful had any jarring note been struck in the beginning.

As Udall had foreseen, the natives regained confidence, now that an able-bodied white was once more in charge. The house-boys, who had been in the habit of attending Headley's wants, returned and took up their duties again.

The station itself was nice enough; in fact, more tolerable than might have been expected. The rooms were large and airy, with native-woven matting on the floors; the furniture, while simple, was all that was needed, and comfortable. The only drawback was the corrugated iron roofing, which, with only a hessian ceiling beneath it, made for hot conditions during the day; the breeze that came up at sundown, however, soon cooled the spacious rooms, making sleep possible.

Val took possession of the southern side of the house, leaving Soutar two rooms adjacent to the store proper, where all the articles of trade were kept. Usually they had their meals out on the wide verandah overlooking the beach and, beyond that, the vivid blue sweep of the ocean. For Soutar, with a past made up almost entirely of hardship, uncertainty and danger, the change of environment was, at first, difficult to realise. To be able to wake in the mornings with hours of pleasant loafing in front of him, to be waited on, and to have a strange domain to explore—these things made him feel that he had entered upon a new life altogether. And then there was Val's companionship.

Very early in their sojourn on the island they found a roomy rock-pool at the southern end of the lagoon. There they swam every morning before breakfast, in improvised bathing dress. It was magnificent, diving down into that crystal-clear water, and coming up in triumph with a handful of the fine sand that carpeted the bottom of the pool. Soutar enjoyed, too, the half-hour after the swim. Tired by the unaccustomed exercise, he lay on the beach, basking in the early morning sun, not yet hot enough to be uncomfortable, and watched Val, as she sat combing out her long, golden hair.

Quite naturally, they had taken to calling each other by their christian names. It would have been too absurd to do anything else. Over their first meal ashore Val had said:

"Udall and the Frenchman call you 'Kid.' I don't think I shall. You look much too grown-up for that. What's your name? Not your surname—I know that."

They had smiled at each other, thinking of that first strange introduction. Then Soutar had answered her.

"James, er, Jim," he said doubtfully, and then added, "Sound's funny. Nobody's called me that for years."

"Well, I'm going to call you Jimmie from now on," Val assured him.

"O.K. Val," he said.

After breakfast, and before the sun got too high, they usually spent an hour or two exploring that part of the island more adjacent to the store. Rounding the headland at the northern end of the

lagoon one of the first of these expeditions, they came on another beach, smaller than that on which they had landed, and fringed by the inevitable surf-covered reef. There, floating in the calm water, about twenty yards from the shore, they saw a fair-sized cutter, which Val estimated later to be about fifteen tons. Looking down from the ground above the beach, she looked beautiful lying there, her white sides and slender, reaching mast mirrored in the still lagoon. Val did not attempt to hide her excitement.

She turned to Soutar, her eyes sparkling with pleasure.

"Let's go down and look her over. What fun! The two of us can handle her—or, at any rate, with one boy for forward hand in good weather. We'll sail. You can start your lessons again."

With a back-fung look at him, she commenced to run down to the beach, gracefully, like some wild thing. Soutar followed more slowly, trying to fit this light-hearted, laughing comrade into the background of Udall, the gabs, and dope running. Shaking his head, he gave up the puzzle. He had never had much to do with women, and this first really intimate glimpse of one left him bewildered. He broke into a run, tearing down the slope after her.

Without much trouble they found the cutter's dinghy drawn up under an improvised boatshed of rocks and brush. Soutar turned her over to empty out the water, left in her to prevent her planks from shrinking. Together they ran the little shell down to the water, embarking in her, after Val had wet herself to the knees in her insistence on helping to launch her. There was an argument then as to who should row, but Soutar decided the question by seizing the oars and shoving Val into the stern. A few strokes brought them to the cutter, and, fastening the dinghy's painter to a cleat in the stern, they climbed aboard.

They found the boat in perfect order. Below, in the small cabin, everything was shipshape. For her size, the accommodation was surprisingly good; two bunks in the cabin, which were seats at ordinary times, a table, a hanging lamp and, strangely enough, a small bookcase packed with cheap novels of every description. Further investigation revealed that Headley must have been a very thorough fellow, who believed in being prepared for all emergencies. The cutter was well provisioned, the lockers containing food sufficient for a long trip and the water breakers full.

Forward, they found a tiny foc'sle fitted up for a crew of two; the boat was rigged in such a manner that, except under exceptional weather conditions, three men could handle her with ease. The mainsail was still on her, snugged close down to the heavy boom, and carefully protected from the weather by a tarpaulin cover. The jib was off, stowed below, but Val announced that it could be put on her in a brace of shakes any time they wanted to sail.

The girl was as excited as a child with a new toy. She went over the cutter thoroughly, from stem to stern, examining every inch of her. Only Soutar's unshakable determination to row out in the dinghy and explore the passages in the reef, before allowing her to attempt to take the cutter out, prevented Val from immediately trying the boat's qualities. After a long, heated discussion he won his point. The two of them rowed out to the line of surf and discovered a fairly wide gap in the reef, through which a boat of the cutter's size could be sailed without difficulty. It was agreed that they should take one of the boys next morning and try her out.

Immediately after breakfast the two would set out over the headland to the boat, accompanied by one of Headley's boys, Tommy, who, they discovered by dint

of a little questioning, had been one of the regular crew on those occasions when there had been any sailing to be done. For some obscure reason, neither Val nor Soutar suggested bringing the cutter round and mooring her in front of the store; possibly because of the never-falling thrill it afforded them to breast the hill each morning, and look down at her riding calmly at anchor, her reflection as perfect in outline as she was herself.

After his three weeks on the Alicy, Soutar found that he picked up very rapidly the art of sailing this smaller craft. Val was an indefatigable teacher; in fact, he had to insist, on those occasions when he felt particularly lazy, on her taking the tiller herself, in this way allowing him to stretch out on the deck and enjoy the smooth, easy running of the boat, and listen to the soothing rush and slap of the water along the sides. This was something of which he never tired; this languid restfulness, lying on his back, his head supported in his clasped hands, looking up at the towering white mainsail, curving tautly in the wind against the rich blue of the sky, and hearing the sucking of the ocean against the timbers, and the creak of tackle in the blocks.

Val, also, made no secret of her contentment; whether at the tiller herself, preparing meals down in the small cabin, or imitating Soutar's habit of choosing a spot in the shade of the mainsail and drowsing, she appeared to be doing the thing she best liked. Neither of them found it necessary to talk much; they drifted naturally into that stage of friendship in which casual conversation is no longer essential. When they had something to say they said it, but at other times their contented silence indicated the degree of understanding that had sprung up between them.

They endeavored to ascertain from the boy, Tommy, the name of the island on which they were living, but either he did not know or had not sufficient English to understand their questions. They debated the matter themselves, deciding that it was essential that their temporary kingdom should have a name of some sort, and Soutar suggested "Udall Island." Val, however, turned up her nose at this effort and, after a few minutes of concentration, gave her judgment.

"Dope Island," she said triumphantly.

"Very descriptive."

Dope Island it became from then on.

Returning one day rather earlier than usual to the small lagoon in which the cutter anchored, they sent the boy ashore and lay on the deck under an awning that Soutar spread, enjoying a final hour of sleepy lounging. So far they had refrained from discussing the events and motives responsible for bringing them together. Now, rather surprisingly to Soutar who had forgotten that such states existed as the past and the future, Val propped herself on her elbow and asked, in a careless voice, how he came to be associated with Udall.

"You don't seem to fit in with the crowd," she said, in explanation of her question.

Soutar laughed.

"Oh, I've been with Udall for years," he said. "I knew him when I was a kid, battling round on my own. That was before Udall got the gang together; before he was in the smuggling game. It was Palsey who picked me up first. He's been with Udall for a long time. Well, at first, I used to just do odd things for them. Then later, Udall got on to smuggling opium, got the boys around him, and I just took my place with the rest of 'em. That was until one night I had a break with them. But I suppose you heard about that..."

Val was looking at him with steady, blue eyes.

"Udall told me something about it; not much. The Frenchman tried to give me more details, but I've never encouraged him to enter into long conversations. I'd like to hear your story of it."

Lying there under the awning, the Kid told her. At first he spoke haltingly, but as the memory of that night became more vivid, his voice took on a deeper quality. He described the chase through the dark, himself and the Frenchman, dragging the unconscious policeman through the streets, the gang's decision to finish off their enemy. At this point, he burst out passionately:

"God, Val! I couldn't sit there and see them do it. To stand by while Billy or the Frenchman showed a knife into the poor devil lying on the floor, was more than I could stand. They all thought I was turning dog on them, I suppose, but it wasn't that at all. Oh, it's hard to explain . . ."

The girl was sitting up now, her face averted, looking out to sea.

"I understand," she said. Soutar felt, somehow, that she did. The knowledge caused him a curious light-heartedness. He was silent for a moment and then resumed.

"Well, you know the rest, I guess. I got myself into a mess after I got out, then nearly did for myself by running into the very man I was trying to keep away from."

His silence was eloquent.

"I've been lucky. I expected to be quietly got rid of when I woke up on the Alicia, and realised what I'd walked into. As it is, I'm back with the boys again. Good thing for me Udall was hard up for a man at Suva; he doesn't usually forget anyone who crosses him. Of course, he knows he's got it all over me. That means a lot to him in the job I'm going to do."

He broke off, abruptly, and laughed.

"But I'm sick of talking about myself. How about you, Val?"

"Me? Oh, I've been running my business for some time. Dope, as you know. Mostly cocaine. It's profitable, but I can make it more profitable. I met Gilbert in Melbourne. We got a bit friendly and he took me along to see Udall. You know the rest. Udall can make a bit extra out of me without any extra trouble, and I can use his organisation. That's all there is to our connection. I don't trust him. I don't mind telling you that, although you're his man; he knows it already."

In the west the sun was on the point of plunging into the ocean. Sea and sky were dyed with its flaming radiance, and the two on the cutter sat still, hushed by the fierce beauty of the evening. A few gulls hovered and swooped overhead, sometimes dropping plummet-like into the lagoon, as their keen, small eyes detected fish near the surface. As the last paring of the sun disappeared over the horizon, Soutar rose and started to undo the dinghy's painter.

"Time to be moving," he said.

Val did not stir immediately. Soutar was in the dinghy shipping the oars, when her voice reached him, very casual and disinterested, from the deck above.

"Did you ever hear of a man called Richard Heatherley?"

In the dinghy Soutar started involuntarily, but she could not see the effect her question had produced. For a second he was immobile, one ear half in the rowlock, the other shipped. When he answered, it was in a tone as off-hand as her own:

"Heatherley? Can't say I have. What was he?"

"I don't know exactly," Val said. "Somebody in my business mentioned the name once and I've never been able to get it out of my head. It's unusual, isn't it? I just thought you might have known it. You know, sometimes you hear something that arouses your curiosity and, if you can't satisfy it, it gets to be almost an obsession."

"Yes," Soutar answered, steadying the dinghy as she climbed down into it.

But paddling back to the beach, he kept repeating that unusual name to himself.

Heatherley! What did Val know of Dick Heatherley? Why should she be questioning him about the man? The mystery that he had always felt surrounded the girl deepened.

During the second week on the island, Fulstrom arrived from Suva. He was in a hurry; did not even bring his brigantine into the lagoon, but hove-to outside and brought the small consignment of opium ashore in one of the ship's boats. He was a hard-case Swede, who gaped with astonishment on being welcomed by Soutar and the girl. He swore fiercely that the leakage and Heatherley's misfortune had not come from him or any of his crew. He had seen neither the Alicia nor the brig she was pursuing, so he said.

An hour after landing, he left them, saying that he had to see a man in Canton—he winked—about a dog. Soutar and Val watched him climb aboard, and then saw the yards come round, as the brigantine got under way once more. She was a smart ship, Val said, very like her father's last.

This was the only interruption in the succession of idyllic days, until nearly a month had elapsed since Udall had called away, leaving them to await his return. Time did not hang heavily on their hands. There was always the cutter, and their swimming, or walks when the evening coolness had come over the island, through the coconut groves which yielded the copra that the Alicia carried to Sydney as a cloak for her more important activities. The relationship between them did not change; Dope Island seemed to be a vacuum in which human emotions were kept free from all disturbing elements. Neither Soutar nor Val wished anything different; they were content with things as they were; with the comradeship that made every minute they spent together enjoyable, free from the constraint that the least hint of any stronger feeling on either side must inevitably have brought about.

It was nearing the end of their fourth week that, walking over the headland after breakfast to take the cutter out, Val's sharp eyes caught sight of something that might have been the merest fleck of white cloud on the rim of the ocean. She caught Soutar's arm.

"Look, Jimmie, a sail! It must be the Alicia coming back."

The night before Soutar had been talking of the possibility of Udall returning shortly, but now he frowned, peering in the direction given by the girl's pointing finger.

"Can't be," he muttered, half to himself, and then aloud: "Unless, of course, they came up with the Chinaman before he reached Fiji."

Val glanced at him.

"But," she said. "The Alicia could do the trip to Suva and back in four weeks. As a matter of fact, if the Chinaman's brig was in anything like trim Udall couldn't have caught her with the wind as it is at this time of the year. But that's no reason why Udall shouldn't have settled up in Suva, and still be back."

"No," Soutar said rather hurriedly. "I was forgetting. It's not such a great distance."

All idea of the cutter abandoned, they sat down and watched the approaching vessel which, within an hour, was hull up on the horizon. Val, for some time, had been staring out to sea with puckered, puzzled eyes. She now turned to Soutar.

"That's not the Alicia," she said. "The rig's all wrong. That's a brig beating in."

"Looks like Fulstrom coming back," Soutar exclaimed.

The girl looked at him with a grave face.

"Fulstrom sails a brigantine," she said. "This is a brig." She repeated it, "A brig!" For a moment the significance of her

description eluded Soutar. Suddenly realization came.

"A brig! Good God! That Chow who raided the place and knocked Heatherley about was sailing a brig, wasn't he?"

Val nodded soberly.

"Yes."

Soutar started to his feet, his eyes hard, jaw set sternly.

"Listen," he said, "you'll have to get away and keep out of sight on the cutter, d'you hear? I'll send Tommy and one of the other boys down to you."

He thought hard for a minute. Then:

"Blas't it!" he said. "You haven't got your gun with you. Down at the house, I suppose?"

"Yes," Val said calmly.

"All right, we'll have time to race down and get it. Then you and the two boys can light out for the small lagoon. Thank God we saw that damned brig in time."

He turned on his heel, plainly expecting the girl to follow, and, at a quick pace, they returned to the store. Arrived there, however, Val put unexpected opposition in his way, declaring that she would prefer to stay with him and see the thing out. The Kid was on the point of saying something forcible about foolishness when the loyalty of her attitude struck him. He smiled, and put his hand on her shoulder.

"Listen, Val," he said. "You'd only make things harder. I'm not going to let these swine get away with a second lot of stuff if I can help it. I'll hide the tins, and they can go hopping to hell before I tell them where it is. If you're about you'll only complicate things. Now be a sensible girl and do as I ask. I'll bluff them, don't you worry, and, as soon as the place is clear again, I'll haul you from the headland. But," his voice was very serious, "if anyone tries to set off to the cutter without hailing, don't hesitate, shoot!"

With a meekness that was quite foreign to her, Val gave in.

"All right, Jimmie," she said, and then, "But you won't do anything silly like Heatherley, will you?"

He shook his head.

"No; it'd be no use. I'm not even going to carry a gun. It'd only be asking for trouble flashing a revolver around in front of a crowd like that."

They stood briefly, looking soberly at each other. The girl's face was pale and anxious, but there was no hint of fear in her eyes.

"You will look after yourself?" she urged.

"Trust me," Soutar assured her, again. He squeezed her shoulder, and then blurted out:

"You're a damned good little pal, Val. But you'll have to get away. Where are those boys?"

Tommy and the other boys were waiting on the verandah. Soutar swept Val outside and gave her shoulder a final pressure.

"Good luck, Val. You'll hear me hailing you soon."

"Good luck, Jimmie."

Left alone, Soutar experienced a feeling of loneliness, short-lived, but it seemed more intense than any emotion he had ever felt. Then the need for action benumbed all thought of anything else. He hurried into the store-room and commenced getting out the tins of opium, which, after Fulstrom departed, he had put away under a pile of print stuff. There was little time to think of the most suitable hiding place, but it occurred to him that the big tanks at the side and back of the house, used for storing rainwater, would be as good places for a cache as any. A few hurried trips and the tins had been dropped into their hiding place; just how long they would be undiscovered Soutar did not try to guess. He had done the best he could.

Coming out on to the verandah, he noticed

the unusual quietness; there was no sign anywhere of a native. Had any other proof of the identity of the oncoming ship been needed this general flight to the bush would have been sufficient. Soutar lit a cigarette and sat down to wait until the brig came to anchor. She was close in now, a lovely picture, gliding along with her square sails drawing well and the big fore and aft masts bellying in the following wind. Whoever was sailing her knew his job; when she was opposite the passage through the reef she came round smartly and slid through the narrow channel as easily as if her skipper had been using the anchorage all his life. When the anchor plunged into the calm waters of the lagoon, Soutar rose and sauntered down to the beach to meet the boat that put off practically immediately.

If the boat's crew was a fair sample of the brig's complement, Hedley's description of the raiders had not done them an injustice; they looked as scoundrelly and polyglot a quartette as could have been picked up anywhere. As the boat grounded, the fifth man, who had been sitting in the stern sheets steering, rose, and picking his way between the oarsmen reached the bow and jumped to the beach. Soutar saw that he was a full-blooded Chinaman. He was dressed in white trousers and shirt, the only concession to Eastern costume being the straw slippers on his feet. Advancing towards Soutar, this personage bowed and smiled, and, somewhat to Soutar's surprise—he had expected to hear the usual clipped Chinese pidgin-English—addressed him in pleasant, even, cultured tones, without a trace of accent.

"I am Mister Fu," he said.

CHAPTER 6

THE smiling Mister Fu, having introduced himself, bowed again. Soutar assumed his most ingenuous air.

"Called for water?" he asked innocently. "Water, and—other things," the Chinaman replied. "Excuse me a moment."

He turned and addressed the four men who had rowed him ashore.

"Get that boat up on the beach. And stay here; no going off! D'you hear?"

It was a different voice altogether from that in which he had spoken to Soutar but, when he spoke to the latter again, his tone was once more soft and honeyed.

"You were going to ask me up to the store? I am sorry to have interrupted you, Mister . . . ?"

"Soutar."

"Ah, yes, of course, Mister Soutar!"

He said it in the manner of one carefully noting some important fact, and storing it up for the future. Side by side, they commenced to walk up from the beach to the store. They left the tough-looking nondescripts from the brig leaning against the boat, smoking and talking together. Although he could detect no signs of weapons, Soutar knew that they were armed. Moreover, he had no false ideas concerning Mister Fu's trustfulness; the slight bulge under the Chinaman's shirt was sufficient indication of the revolver holster slung under his armpit. Chatting desultorily, for all the world as if the ship lying at anchor in the lagoon had called casually for trading purposes or to re-victual, they reached the store.

Offered a drink, after Soutar had installed him on one of the chairs on the verandah, Mister Fu refused courteously.

"You will excuse me, I trust, but I make it a rule never to touch alcohol. A whim, but in my business I cannot afford to. But a cigarette . . ."

Soutar forebore to ask what his business was, and passed the tin of cigarettes. It was accepted with a graceful inclination of the head. They leant back, smoking in silence for a while. Soutar, in fact, could

think of nothing to say. The whole situation was too absurd; his own position, sitting here on the verandah smoking with the man who was responsible for shooting Headley and was quite likely to treat him in the same fashion; Udall's wild-goose chase to Fiji; and, above all, the high-flown politeness of this smooth Oriental. Soutar was accustomed to more direct methods than this. In his experience, if one crook coveted the spoils of a rival, he demanded it bluntly, at the point of a gun. But this surface fraternising . . .

Mister Fu interrupted his meditations. "And your—er—employer, friend? Mister Udall, I mean. How is he? Quite well, I trust."

Soutar could not help grinning at the impudence of it.

"Udall? Oh, he's quite well. I'm expecting him back any time now. Pity he's away. He'd be glad to see you."

The Chinaman did not stir a muscle.

They again lapsed into silence until Mister Fu, tossing what remained of his cigarette over the verandah rail, scraped his chair around until he was facing Soutar. His urbane mask could well have served as a model for any Western student of diplomacy.

"You have heard, no doubt," he said, "that I am interested in opium?"

Soutar, determined to match him in his own art of maintaining composure, did not give any sign of surprise.

"Are you?" he said.

Mister Fu shrugged good-humoredly.

"I imagined your Mister—er—Headley would have informed you."

He watched closely for any hint on Soutar's part, of betrayal, and continued:

"I relieved your Mister Headley of some that he was holding and which I thought, mistakenly perhaps, might have been embarrassing him."

It was so perfectly said that Soutar could not, for the life of him, prevent a chuckle bursting from his lips. The Chinaman's face twitched, as if he, too, was near to smiling, but, when he carried on, his voice was as grave as ever.

"I really called in to see whether I might not pick up some more."

Soutar, entering into the spirit of the thing, shook his head solemnly.

"Bad luck! I haven't an ounce I could sell you."

Mister Fu bent down and extracted another cigarette from the tin lying on the verandah boards between them. When it was alight, he sat back expelling two billowing jets of smoke from his nostrils.

"A pity. I was informed that you had some here. Quite new stock, in fact."

The kid looked at him blankly, shrugging his shoulders in a manner which, he hoped, would convey an impression of absolute incredulity. At the same time he was thinking rapidly. There could be no longer any doubt about it; the Swede was playing a double game. A cunning fellow, Fulstrom, apparently, and yet, what a fool! How long did he think he could get away with raw stuff like that, when he was dealing with Udall. The soft voice was drawing on.

"But, possibly, the opium to which I am referring was landed amongst other stores and escaped your notice. Such things are possible." With upraised hand, he checked Soutar's effort at interruption. "Please don't bestir yourself. Later I shall have my men endeavor to find it. Why should you be bothered?"

Soutar shrugged.

"As you wish. But you will be disappointed."

Mister Fu smiled.

"I'm not in the habit of allowing myself to be disappointed. Probably because I never hope for impossibilities. One must always be sure of the attainability of what one desires, before setting out to get it,

and then—why, it is only a matter of trying every method to bring about the desired result."

The action might have been inadvertent, but his hand touched lightly the bulge under his left armpit. He then deserted altogether the subject of opium and commenced to speak of other things: ships, travel, the Chinese political situation, the future of the Pacific. Soutar had never met anyone who could talk so much and so entertainingly.

They had lunch together on the verandah. Mister Fu insisted on bringing ashore the brig's cook, since Soutar's house boys were not in evidence. Evidently, instructions had been given to the boat's crew, during a momentary absence on Soutar's part, for, as the latter sat with his unwelcome guest smoking an after-dinner cigarette, he saw the four slouch past and enter the store-room. The Chinaman was being as good as his word, the search was on. Soutar made no comment; there would have been no point in doing so. He had no intention, if he could help it, of ending up as Headley had.

Time enough to meet trouble when it came and, remembering a certain expression he had caught in Mister Fu's eyes, Soutar had no doubt that trouble would come sure enough, if, as he had planned, the hunt for the cached opium proved unsuccessful.

It took an hour and a half for the searchers to ascertain that they had either been misinformed regarding the presence of opium on the island, or that it had been skilfully hidden. In response to a summons from the store-room door, Mister Fu excused himself and retired to confer with his ruffianly supporters. He returned, outwardly as affable as ever, but with a hardness about the mouth and slit eyes that bade Soutar beware. The quartette from the boat lolled in the shade of a palm, apparently waiting for instructions. Soutar nerved himself for the approaching struggle.

But the Chinaman was in no hurry. He finished what he had been saying, when called away, about the habits of typhoons and then appeared to fall into a reverie. From this he eventually aroused himself to remark on the wonderful contradictions of the human character.

"All men are good and bad," he observed. "Most have the good and bad about evenly mixed; a very small minority have more good qualities than bad, or vice versa. But how strange it is to see two opposite qualities existing quite healthily in the one person. For instance, I," he tapped his breast with a long, yellow forefinger, "I am by nature a peaceable, kindly person. And yet, there are occasions on which I have been known to become violent, to inflict pain. Yes, even to do it wittingly, hardening myself to all feeling of pity." He settled himself comfortably in his chair, as if purposing to give a friendly dissertation. "We'll assume there was something I wanted badly, and which I suspected might deliberately be hidden away from me. Such a thought would enrage me and, under the influence of this unseemly passion, I might do things which, normally, would be foreign to me, such as tearing the nails from the fingers and toes of the person who would not tell me where what I wanted—such as, say, opium—was hid. I wanted—such a lighted taper under his armpit. Funny enough, when these things happen I never regret them afterwards; it is as if they were done by somebody else. I, myself, as I have said, am by nature gentle."

"Are you?" Soutar said.

Mister Fu rose to his feet.

"But I am boring you with all this talk about myself; my men tell me they cannot locate the opium which we know, on cer-

tain authority, was landed here. Perhaps you might care to assist them? There are, no doubt, places in the buildings here, or surrounding it, which your superior knowledge would suggest to you as being likely places for storing opium or other valuable merchandise."

Soutar looked up at him. It was no use attempting to defer the crisis.

"It would be useless," he said. "I have no idea where Udall, or anyone working for him, would be likely to put the stuff. This is my first time on the island—as a matter of fact, I've just joined Udall. I know no more about the business than you do."

All pretence to friendliness had vanished from Mister Fu's face. His expression was hard. The corners of the mouth turned down and the eyes gleaming slits.

"You poor fool," he said. "How long do you think you will talk like that? The little methods I mentioned to you for extracting information from an unwilling subject are nothing. A mere beginning."

Knowing that the Chinaman was not threatening idly, Soutar yet made an effort to fight. He sneered:

"Oh, yes? And don't you think Udall and the boys know one or two tricks themselves? I'd hate to be you even now, after shooting Headley and getting away with that lot of stuff."

Mister Fu laughed nastily.

"Idle threats! I never do anything with my eyes closed. And I never do anything that I do not consider safe. For instance, I do not rob honest men; only thieves and law-breakers. Such people cannot get the assistance of the law—and, unlike fools such as Udall and yourself, I realise that the law is too strong for me. Do you really think Udall will ever get me? Bah! what childishness! I do not return here again; I realise that next time the element of surprise, on which I have relied, would be gone, and I should be met with armed resistance. So Udall will never trap me here. No, my young friend, threats will not help you."

The Kid knew that the Chinaman was right, but he continued to fight more in the hope of gaining time (although he had no idea whence help was coming), than of creating any impression.

"Udall has connections everywhere. He'll get you in the end, and when that comes about..."

When Headley had been taken off in the schooner he had left behind him a small nondescript dog, a mixture of a dozen breeds, and this shaggy animal was now lying in a corner of the verandah, dozing. Mister Fu's whistle brought his four men over to the house. They stood at the foot of the verandah steps, waiting for instructions. He pointed to the dog.

"Tie up that dog. My friend here," he indicated Soutar, "is interested in methods of extracting information. Let us show him."

The men grinned and moved towards Headley's pet. Apparently they had done this kind of thing before. Like most mongrels, the dog was friendly. It opened one eye lazily as they approached and swept its tail over the boards in greeting. The Kid felt sick. He knew what was going to happen, but was powerless to prevent it. Striving to keep from his face the nauseating feeling that was sweeping over him, he watched the dog, struggling now, being trussed up with a cord in such a manner that it could not move. Calm and suave once more, Mister Fu turned to him.

"Just a little indication of the effect of drawing the nails from any living creature."

He addressed one of his four satellites.

"Proceed, Lopez."

Soutar sprang forward.

"Good God! You can't do anything like that," he cried. "You can't, it's too beastly..."

Mister Fu swept him aside.

"Get on with it, Lopez," he smiled. "Mister Soutar imagines that he will be able to withstand similar treatment. We must show him, eh?"

It seemed to Soutar that the dog's howl must have been heard over in the small lagoon where Val was hiding. Mister Fu looked at him smiling.

"Very instructive," he said gently. "Don't be too hurried, Lopez."

The dog's demented howling was worse than anything Soutar had ever heard. White-faced, the muscles of his jaws standing out like knotted cords, he watched, until the frantic clamor ceased abruptly and the small hairy body went limp. Mister Fu looked at him, a mocking apologetic smile on his face.

"Dogs have very little stamina. The heart, I suppose, in this case."

His scornful gesture instructed his men to clear away the carcass.

"But a man can stand much more than that—much more."

Soutar could barely restrain himself from driving his fist into the sneering mouth. He shrugged scornfully.

"And what do you do when your victim doesn't know what you think he knows?"

The cruel lines about the Chinaman's face deepened.

"Keep on until inspiration visits him," he said drily. "But"—he bowed ironically—"you will be wanting to retire to your room to think over what you have seen."

As Soutar was moving away, Mister Fu's voice reached him again.

"I really should advise you to think hard about that opium. I wish to sail no later than to-morrow morning. I must make every endeavor to locate it to-night. I am going aboard now, to attend to some business, so you will excuse me if I do not have the evening meal with you. You will prefer to have it in your room, no doubt. I shall be back at nine o'clock," he paused and then finished softly, "with Lopez."

Alone in his room, knowing that one of the men from the brig was on guard outside his door and another, as a glance had shown him, lounging beneath the window, the Kid sat on his bed and reflected. There was no doubt he was in a bad mess. If, immediately the brig had been sighted, he had bolted like the natives into the bush, he might have been out of this. But if he had made a run for it, any search on the part of Mister Fu must have resulted in the girl, Val, being discovered on the cutter.

Sitting there on the bed, he did not experience any regret for the course he had adopted. He imagined Val in the hands of this yellow devil and shuddered. There could be no regrets. He remembered the girl as he had seen her so often, the sun tangled in her wheat-gold hair, her blue eyes laughing at him, or considering him gravely, her unchanging attitude of comradeship. No, by God! He'd done well to follow a line that would afford her the greatest possible chance of escape.

A thought struck him suddenly, and, rising, he groped beneath the mattress. His fingers encountered something cold; his gun was still there. He drew it out and tucked it into the waistband of his trousers, underneath the shirt. It gave him a certain amount of comfort to feel it there.

When nine o'clock came... But he did not want to think of that. Instead, he lay back on the bed and forced his mind back over the pleasantest period of his life—the three weeks with Val, going over it in detail, recalling every little scrap of action and conversation...

Outside, the coconut palms and bushes

were still in the afternoon sun; the guard underneath the window shifted occasionally to keep in the shade. Time passed; the shadows lengthened; the sun dipped towards the ocean and, as it was extinguished in the Pacific, the evening breeze came up, rustling coolly among the foliage. The guard outside Soutar's door moved restlessly. The Kid still lay on his bed, thinking of a golden girl at the tiller of the cutter, hair blowing loose in the wind and white teeth showing as she laughed.

CHAPTER VII

OVER the headland, in the small lagoon, Headley's cutter lay dreaming at her moorings. No sign of life showed on her decks. Hatch-covers were on and the big mainsail was snugged down under its canvas cover on the boom. But in the tiny cabin, Val Blakely was working feverishly, going through lockers, checking up stores and making all tight. For'ard, in the poky little foc's'le, Tommy and another boy from the store had got the jib ready to be put on at a moment's notice. It seemed that the girl was getting everything prepared for a trip that might be of considerable duration.

She remembered Headley being carried on board the *Alicia* and shuddered. They couldn't do that to Soutar! And yet, her common sense told her that this Chinaman, who had come sailing down on them, could do it. What steps might not the Chinaman take to make Soutar disclose the hiding place of the opium? The girl's face whitened as her imagination ran riot; her finger-nails bit deeply into the palms of her hands.

For a moment that morning, when the Kid had told her she must hide on the cutter and leave him to face the marauders, she had been on the point of refusing. Then her woman's realism came to her assistance; she acknowledged to herself that her presence at the store would only complicate matters. Further, a plan had sprung full-fledged from her active brain. Let Soutar remain at the store. She would go off to the cutter and get everything in readiness to sail. When night came, she would steal ashore with Tommy and bring Soutar aboard. If they could only get away unobserved, they would get a good ten hours' start on the brig and shape a course for Suva. They might even meet Udall, returning on the schooner.

And now everything was ready; she was satisfied that they had ample food and water aboard to last them for a month, and, with favorable winds, they should do the trip in half that time. All that remained now was to pass the few hours that remained before darkness fell. This proved difficult. Try as she would, her thoughts would stray to what might be happening at the house, to the mysterious Chinaman who had descended on them and what he might be doing to Soutar.

Soutar! She had not considered it possible that any man's fate should concern her deeply, but here she had been wrong. Jimmy, she realised, was different somehow. She passed in review the other men she had met and known over the last two or three years, and her face hardened. What a crowd! All of the Frenchman's type, or at best, very little better. Yet, in spite of the deep distrust for their sex that these men had succeeded in implanting in her, she had at once fallen into an easy friendship with Soutar.

Simply by not attempting to force an interest in himself, Jimmy was occupying the major portion of her horizon. She moved half-resentfully, as the consciousness of this came to her, and then relaxed. Wasn't it natural that she should be worried about Soutar's position, about that of anybody, in fact, in the hands of that Chinaman? Quite natural.

She noticed that it was getting darker in the cabin. She must have been sitting here thinking for some time. Before the light should go altogether, she took out her small automatic and examined it thoroughly. It seemed to be in perfect order. She sat down once more to wait just a little longer.

Full night came with tropic suddenness. Carefully, fearful that the least sound should carry in the stillness, Val went on deck. She crept lightly forward and roused out the two boys. In a low voice she explained to Tommy what she planned and, while he was pulling the dinghy up under the cutter's counter, she instructed the other boy to get the job on all ready for immediate hoisting.

Rowing the short distance to the beach, the girl thought that she had never experienced so quiet a night. Sounds that usually could not be heard seemed terrifyingly loud; the drip of water from the dinghy's paddle, the splash of fish leaping further out towards the reef, the soft crash of small waves on the sand.

Acorns passed, before they reached the shore and started to make their cautious way up to the crest of the headland. Val noticed that Tommy had armed himself with a club-like piece of driftwood from the beach, in addition to the knife in his belt. She herself had her revolver.

At the top of the headland, they paused to look down at the store. The oil lamp on the verandah was burning, but there was no other light, except one that came from the back of the house, Soutar's room. It appeared to be. Nobody was on the verandah, and there were no figures visible moving about the house. Val felt a surge of hope pass over her; the Chinaman must have withdrawn to the ship, leaving Jimmy at the store, confident that he could not get away. Nevertheless, her caution did not desert her.

The descent to the house began, progress being more rapid now that Val felt sure that Soutar was the only man inside. They reached the flat ground about thirty yards from the building, and Val was advancing further when Tommy seized her arm, and forced her down behind a clump of scrub. With taut nerves, and trembling with the suddenness of this signal danger, the girl crouched there, automatic in her hand. The boy did not speak, but his finger pointed in the direction of the deep patch of shadow under Soutar's window. At first she could see nothing; then, suddenly, she imagined she detected a movement, and, a second later, she distinctly saw the top of a man's head move across the bottom of the square of light. Jimmy was guarded! The nearness of her escape from wrecking everything made her catch her breath.

Tommy was tugging gently at her sleeve. Speech was not necessary; his gestures indicated that he wanted to leave her and endeavor to deal with the man who was keeping watch below the window. Val considered, very briefly, and then nodded. The revolver was useless to her; a shot, while disabling the guard, perhaps, would bring a whole swarm from the brig on to them. They might be able to get the cutter out before being overtaken, but the risk was too great. Better to allow Tommy to settle things more quietly. Val felt that he would; he had the element of surprise, and a native's ability to take advantage of every inch of cover, to assist him.

In spite of her confidence, however, she found that she was shivering violently. So much was at stake. Her ears were strained for the slightest sound that would arouse Soutar's guard. When no sound came, and hours seemed to have passed since the boy left her side, a new fear attacked her. Had Tommy deserted her? No, she decided, not that. He could have done so earlier had that been in his mind. She was just casting round frantically for fresh reasons to account for the long stillness when the man from the brig came once more into the

sphere of light and stopped dead. From his immobility she guessed that he had heard something and was listening for a repetition of the noise. Asked, she would have said that he remained so for minutes; actually, a couple of seconds passed before she saw two brown hands holding a club flash up against the brightness of the window. Then the club descended.

Still trembling badly, Val rose to her feet and hurried over to the house. Tommy was waiting for her in the shadow under the window. His teeth flashed white in the darkness as he grinned at her. No movement came from the huddled form at their feet. Apparently no sound of the blow had penetrated into the room where she supposed Soutar to be, for nobody approached the window to look out. Not daring to call, for fear that other guards might be about, Val motioned Tommy to risk peering inside to ascertain who was there. With her revolver held ready for a sudden challenge from the room, Val watched him grip the ledge and pull himself up, until the light shone through his mop of wiry hair. Then she heard him say in a low voice:

"Boss."

A slight creak of bed-springs came to her straining ears. Tommy dropped lightly to the ground and Soutar's head and shoulders appeared black against the lamplight. Apparently he could not see her at first in the darkness, although she was standing right under him.

"Jimmy," she whispered, "it's me, Val!"

"Good God, Val!" came his urgent whisper as he turned down towards her. "You shouldn't be here. What...?"

"There's no time, now," she interrupted him. "You've got to come away. You must! The cutter's all ready to sail. It's senseless to stay."

From Soutar's dark silhouette came a low chuckle.

"What's the time?"

Val made a gesture of impatience.

"About eight. But don't play the fool. Hurry! We want every minute we can get."

"You're right," Soutar's whisper came to her. "Eight o'clock. We can just do it."

The waiting girl saw him swing one leg over the window sill. Bringing the other out, his heel knocked heavily against the wooden wall. It seemed to make a terrific clatter. For a split second Soutar sat motionless on the window-ledge, looking back into the room. Val saw, for the first time, that he had a gun in his hand. She heard something that sounded like a door opening.

"God Almighty!" Soutar said aloud and dropped to the ground.

Somebody inside the house called out "hey!" following it with a string of curses.

"Run," Soutar ground out, pushing Tommy and the girl away. "Damn it, bolt! Back to the cutter. I'll catch you."

Under the urgency of his tone, Val ran, the boy guiding her by holding her hand. In a hurried back-flung glance she caught a glimpse of a man leaning out of the window, bellowing angrily. Then Soutar's gun roared and the next thing she heard was the pounding of his footsteps as he followed them.

As they raced along, they saw that the brig had come to life. Lights were moving about her deck and before they were halfway up the headland a moving lantern slipping over the lagoon advised them that the boat was already on its way to the beach.

As they breasted the headland, a shout from the lagoon informed them that they had been seen, outlined against the star-bright skyline. Soutar cursed under his breath and hastened on, helping Val as best he could, and leaving Tommy to find the easiest track. They had a chance, he told himself. Fu and his crew would be

travelling unknown ground in the dark. With a bit of luck, the cutter should be out near the passage before the pursuers reached the edge of the small lagoon.

They plunged down on to the beach, where the dinghy was drawn up waiting for them. Here there was nearly a rebellion on Val's part. Soutar pushed her into the dinghy which they had launched; Tommy already had the oars out.

"Get aboard and get sail on her," Soutar said. "Send Tommy back with the dinghy. Get the cutter out near the passage and we'll join you. Hurry!"

The girl stood firm.

"What about you?"

Soutar muttered something beneath his breath.

"Don't argue," he said roughly, and then, relenting. "I'll stay here until you get under way." He tapped his gun. "I'd like to get a shot at Mister Fu."

"Jimmy, don't!" Val said. Soutar put his hand softly over her mouth.

"Away you go," he said, and to Tommy: "Go on. Row like hell!"

He saw the dinghy glide off, Tommy rowing strongly, and then repaired to the bush that fringed the sand. Here he could see the crest of the headland and would be able to see any pursuers who might come over it before he got away. A quick look at the cutter assured him that Val was aboard. He could see the dark shape of the jib, already rising, black against the sky. Smart work, he admitted to himself. She must have had everything ready to cut and run. He caught the splash of oars as the dinghy returned, and then the scrunch of the sand under her planks as Tommy drew her up so that she should not drift. As the boy came lightfootedly to join him Soutar saw the first of the figures he expected rise over the headland and stand gazing down at the cutter.

It was a long shot for a revolver, even under daylight conditions, but the Kid's aim was to delay the pursuers more than to inflict casualties. He could never hope to fight it out against such odds. He raised his arm, sighted carefully, and fired. The crash of the shot echoed around the small lagoon. The figure that had been silhouetted against the sky disappeared.

He took another quick look at the cutter. The mainsail was up now, and even as he watched she seemed to him to swing away off the wind. He bent down to Tommy.

"Get the dinghy afloat. I'll come soon. When I do, row. Like hell! Get me?"

The boy's grinning nod signified that he had. He disappeared back towards the water's edge. Soutar resumed his watch on the headland. A movement there attracted him. He jerked up his arm and fired again. Immediately an answering shot came from some distance down the hill. The flash from his last shot had disclosed his position. A revolver cracked again, the bullet whirling away over his head. But he had noted the flash this time; his return shot roared out, to be succeeded by a cry and the noise of a body thrashing about up the hill among the bush.

The cutter was well out now. Soutar rose to his knees and emptied his magazine fanwise at the position on the slope, where he thought his enemies were most likely to be. The staccato noise of the shots filled the small basin of the lagoon. Before those above could recover from the shock of this fusillade he was on his feet dashing over the sand, and then, thigh deep in water, pulling himself into the dinghy. As he sat in the stern with Tommy pulling madly at the oars he heard a yell echo down from the headland, and the thud of men running downhill through the scrub.

They came out on to the beach and commenced firing, just as he succeeded in jamming another clip of cartridges into his gun. From the noise of the firing and the whine of the lead about the dinghy he judged that there must be six or seven of

them looting off there on the beach. When he turned round to take another hand in the game himself, the flashes from their revolvers confirmed this opinion. His return fire caused a scatter; by the time Fu's henchmen had recovered Tommy had the dinghy nearly out of danger. A few more desultory shots pursued them, and then silence descended over the lagoon.

It was not until then that the Kid realised how much this running and fighting had taken out of him. He was soaked through with perspiration. His nerves seemed to have relaxed; his teeth chattered uncontrollably. Over on the right, close in to the reef, and near the passage, he saw the cutter looming. A minute later, and Tommy had brought the dinghy alongside.

Rising stiffly, Soutar was aware of a dim form bending over to help him aboard. Then he was on deck, with Val clinging to him. "There was nothing strange in it; it seemed quite natural that she should and that he should pat her, gently and reassuringly."

"Oh, Jimmy! I'm glad. You're all right?" "All right, Val. And you?"

"Me! Jimmy, it's been terrible being here, listening to that firing. It seemed..."

She drew away from him. The Kid thought that she was dabbling at her eyes.

"Well, we're all right, Val, for a while," he said. "But we'll have to get out. We'll need every minute's start we can grab."

The girl was her old dependable self in a moment.

"All right," she snapped. "I'll get her out of this in five minutes. You get on to that sheet, Jimmy. Tommy!" to the boy who had just fastened the painter of the dinghy and climbed aboard, "up forward, and keep your eyes skinned. Bunker will look after the jib sheet."

She put the tiller over and the cutter felt the breeze, commencing to slip through the water purposefully. Soutar compared the exhilaration of her easy motion with the hopelessness of his position two short hours before. Two? why, it could not be much more than nine o'clock now. Nine o'clock! He chuckled. Quite a different nine o'clock to the one planned by the gentle Mr. Fu. Val's dark figure was close to him, steering the cutter through the narrow channel now. His exultation mounted. What a girl she was! He felt that he must say something anything, so that he might hear the sound of her voice in reply.

"What did you call that mate of Tommy's, Val?" he asked.

"Bunker," she said. "I was calling him 'boy' to-night, while we were getting the jib on her, and he told me that Headley had always called him 'Bunker.' Seemed very proud of it."

Soutar laughed. It was so good to hear his own mirth that he could not stop. Val caught the infection and their laughter mingled, ringing out clearly on the still night air. The Kid's hand found Val's and pressed it. Her fingers answered the pressure, then, as if embarrassed, they broke the clasp and returned to normal.

"By the way, Val," Soutar said, "where are we making for?"

"Fiji—Suva, I take it," Val replied. "Best thing to do. Might pick up the Alicia on her way back."

CHAPTER 3.

AS soon as they were well clear of the island, Soutar, in spite of Val's spirited protests, sent the girl below for a sleep, taking the tiller himself. They had not set the cutter on a southerly course, but were sailing due east. Soutar thought, and Val agreed with him, that the Chinese would probably guess that they would make for Fiji and set out directly in pursuit. By sailing east, and then, after a couple of days, turning south, they hoped to outwit him.

The Kid sat, breathing in great draughts of salt-tanged air, feeling the pull of the tiller in his hand. He passed the night dreaming, and, if the figure of a girl appeared frequently in these mind-pictures, the fact did not strike him as being unnatural. At dawn the wind dropped and the ocean became very still. A blue line of cloud was on the horizon, barely visible. The sun rose, blood red in the east, blazing a crimson trail across the sea to where the cutter lay, motionless now, in the calm.

Soutar rose stiffly from his seat at the tiller, and stretched. Until the sun came he had lost count of time, but with full day arrived his exalted mood passed and he cursed the dead calm that was delaying them. At his call Tommy came aft with a bucket of seawater in which Soutar washed, drying himself on a piece of canvas. He had just completed his rough toilet when Val came on deck, as radiant as ever, and announced that she had breakfast prepared.

The sight of her dispelled the Kid's ill-temper. Handing the tiller over to Tommy and cautioning Bunker to keep an eye out for any sign of a sail, he went below to the meal Val had prepared. Neither of them spoke much over breakfast; both were suffering a reaction from the previous day and night. When Soutar had drained his last cup of coffee and expressed his inability to eat any more, Val rose.

"I'll take charge now, Jimmy," she said. "You get in a bit of sleep."

The weather was unchanged when he rejoined Val on deck. They took their dinner sitting under the awning, which Val had had the boys spread under the heavy boom earlier in the morning. They chatted desultorily until Val, who had been silent for a few minutes staring out over the oily swell, asked:

"Jimmy, why did you laugh last night when I said that we might meet the Alicia coming back from Suva?"

Soutar's face as she turned to look at it was a blank mask.

"Must have been a slight touch of hysteria after my little party on the beach with Mister Fu and his friends."

Val laughed scornfully.

"You hysterical! You'll have to think of something better than that, Jimmy, to satisfy me."

Soutar looked at her, a shade of amusement passing over his face.

"Surely, Val, you don't expect my voice to be entirely normal after the hour I had put in, do you? I'm not one of those iron men who can go through anything without turning a hair."

"The girl did not respond to his attempt at humor. Instead, she pursued her inquiry doggedly.

"You're not playing fair, Jim Soutar," she said. "Are you, or aren't you, going to tell me what you were thinking of?"

The Kid did not reply for a moment. When he did make up his mind to speak, he leant forward, looking her full in the eyes.

"If I do, will you tell me why you are interested in Richard Heatherley?"

He had not anticipated the effect his question would have on her. Her cheeks lost their color, and one hand went to her breast, as if to still the tumultuous beating of her heart. Soutar was shocked at the sudden change in her.

"What is it, Val?" he said anxiously, and caught her hand.

She pushed him away.

"Nothing," she said, adding after a pause, "just a sudden sick turn. Must be the heat. I'll go below for a bit and lie down."

He watched her walk slowly across the deck and down the small companionway to the cabin. When she had gone he sat back and thought hard. What connection was there between Dick Heatherley and her? While Soutar had not been a witness of the young man's end, he could, he re-

flected grimly, reconstruct the scene pretty accurately. But Val! No, he was ready to swear she had not been connected with it.

He continued to ponder the problem, brooding there over the dead tiller, without reaching any satisfactory solution until, suddenly, a thought struck him. Hadn't he heard something once...? By God! he slapped his thigh; if that should be the case it would explain a lot. Before he could continue with this conjecture, that which, subconsciously, he had half expected, happened. Tommy hailed him from the forward and pointed out, far away on the port bow, a sail.

His pulses beating a bit above normal rate, Soutar dived down into the cabin for the glasses. Val was sitting on a bunk, and when he entered appeared to have regained her composure. Swiftly he explained the position to her, adding that, of course, the vessel Tommy had sighted might, probably would, be an entire stranger, or even the Alicia. Together they hastened on deck, where the glasses showed the object of their attention to be square rigged on the foremast, at any rate. A very little time passed before Soutar was able to say that it was approaching fairly rapidly, apparently driven by an auxiliary engine.

The Kid cursed viciously to himself. He did not know whether the Chinaman's brig was equipped with an auxiliary or not, but it was possible. Further, he did not put it past Mister Fu to have divined their plan for eluding him. Scowling, he swung down to the cabin and belted on his revolver. The heavy pull of the belt reassured him. With a steady hand he poured himself out a peg of whisky and, after drinking it, went on deck again.

Val was still looking through the glasses when he returned.

"It's your friend, Mister Fu, I'm afraid," she said calmly. "Yesterday morning, when he was sailing off the island, I noticed the rig of his ship; square tops! forward and gaff tops! above his mains! He's got them all set still; apparently didn't take in sail when the calm came."

Soutar grunted. There was not a breath of air and the sails hung motionless. The pursuer was now well within sight and, leaning over the rail, Soutar could not repress a thrill of admiration at her slim beauty. Moving his revolver holster caught something. He released it, registering the thought that Mister Fu would find him different to-day.

It seemed only a minute before the brig hove to within hailing distance. Soutar was conscious of a tightening at his throat. The moment for resistance had arrived. He swung round on Val and ordered her below. For reply, she gave him a curiously still look and then displayed the small automatic she held in her hand. Even at that moment he wondered where in the world she kept it, that she should be able to produce it so unobtrusively. Her face warned him against any further attempts to send her from the deck. Then his attention was taken away by something that was happening across the short stretch of water that separated cutter and brig. A boat was putting off from the latter, a white-clad coatless figure in the stern. Mister Fu was calling in person.

Moved by an impulse to keep Val out of it as long as possible, the Kid sent Val away from the side to the centre of the deck. The girl obeyed this request readily enough, taking up a position against the mast. From his own place, still at the rail, Soutar saw her slip back the safety-catch of her gun and smiled grimly. Still, if he could only manoeuvre for time, shooting might not be necessary—yet. It was possible that, intent on the chase, the Chinaman had not noticed the mass of black cloud that was piling up in the northeast, spreading rapidly. . . .

The boat from the brig snubbed gently against the cutter's side. Fu, who was seated in the stern-sheets, could not have failed to observe Soutar at the rail. But

he had given no sign. Now, as one of the crew steadied the boat with a boathook, the Chinaman rose, smiling brilliantly on the man he had come to take.

"Coming aboard, Mister Soutar," he said suavely.

"Just a minute," Soutar said, and produced his gun.

Mister Fu's hand flew to the bulge beneath his armpit.

"Don't be silly, Fu," the Kid said calmly. "You're a dead man if you try any of that stuff." Noting a movement on the part of the carmen, he added, "or any of your crew. You hear me?"

The last words were rapped out, and the Chinaman shot an oath at the man who had been indiscreet. Then he looked up once more at Soutar.

"Very silly of you, Soutar," his honied tones recommenced. "You haven't got a chance. I have other men on board the brig. Shoot me and you'll be run down. They may leave you as food for the Pacific sharks or they may pick you up to provide a little amusement for themselves. Neither would be over-comfortable—for you."

What he said was true enough. The Kid knew it, but continued to argue. Time was what he wanted.

"I told you yesterday I didn't know where there was any opium on the island. You're wasting your time."

Mister Fu smiled pleasantly.

"Very good indeed," he applauded. "You would make an excellent actor, Soutar. But I am suspicious enough to think that what I was seeking may have been on this cutter all the time."

Soutar thought quickly. So that was it; the Chow thought they had the stuff aboard. Black clouds were now covering half the heavens; very soon the sun would be obscured. He injected a more cordial note into his voice.

"Oh, so that's it. You think I've got opium aboard here, do you? Well, if that's all that's troubling you, you can come aboard and look. Only," the Kid's voice grew hard again, "you can leave your gun behind and your men."

For a second the Chinaman hesitated. Then, smiling evilly, he drew the revolver from beneath his armpit and tossed it to one of the men at the oars.

The Chinaman climbed up over the cutter's counter. He gained the deck with cat-like ease; standing for a moment he allowed himself a sweeping glance that took in everything. As his gaze encountered Val, he started, but this evidence of surprise was only momentary. His bow was low and mock-deferential.

"You did not tell me," he said, turning to Soutar, who was still keeping the boat's crew under observation, "that you had a beautiful lady aboard." His voice took on an ironic ring. "May I be presented?"

"Shut up!" Soutar snapped harshly, and disregarding the murderous look he received, called: "Come here Val."

The girl came forward, pale, but composed, her automatic in her hand.

"Keep your gun on that scum in the boat," Soutar said. "If any one of 'em stirs to come aboard, pump lead into the lot of 'em. You understand?"

"Yes, Jimmie," Val said quietly.

He turned to the Chinaman.

"Now Fu!"

Mister Fu, in spite of being, for once, at a disadvantage, was thorough.

He started his search of the deck itself, examining every possible hiding place scrupulously. Then, regarded curiously by Tommy and Bunker, he descended into the poky fore-cabin, emerging with narrowing of the slanting eyes and impotent fury boiling within him. With Soutar, he descended to the cabin.

The Kid sat on the small, round table while he searched. Lockers, trunks, every

receptacle capable of holding an ounce were turned out, while Soutar sat smoking. That storm! Would the cursed thing never break? This suspense, with Val's safety his responsibility, was hellish.

Mister Fu finished his examination of the cabin. He straightened up, and looked at Soutar, an ugly gleam in his eye.

"You hide things well, Soutar," he remarked.

He produced a cigarette from his pocket, snapped a vesta, alight on his nail, and lit it, inhaling deeply.

"But you'd better be wise and tell me where the stuff is."

Soutar peered at him through a haze of smoke.

"Damn you, Fu! I've already told you. I know nothing about it."

The Chinaman's smile was the epitome of evil. Gone now was all pretence to urbanity.

"Listen, Soutar," he said in low tones. "I promised to call on you at nine o'clock last night and give you a little treatment that would cure you of your folly. I'll still do it unless you come to your senses. On the brig this time, though. It's no use thinking you've got me here; unless I'm back on board in a reasonable time the brig will come down onto you, and you won't have a chance. You have enough intelligence to see that."

He drew hard at his cigarette, throwing back his head and sending the blue smoke billowing upwards.

"And don't forget," he added, "I've got two now to practise on." He gestured towards the deck. "Oh, perhaps I'll try gentler measures first, with the lady. If I can't succeed in that way my crew might be able to."

"You stinking, yellow cur," Soutar said harshly.

He was standing now, and his gun was coming up slowly. Red hate burned in his eyes; for the moment everything was blotted out except Fu, and the memory of that obscene threat he had uttered against Val. The Chinaman himself seemed to be powerless in the baleful glare of those two eyes boring into his. His skin had taken on a greenish-yellow tinge and his tongue played nervously over dry lips. The Kid's automatic was creeping up remorselessly.

Suddenly, overhead, came the tramp of feet. Someone, Tommy or Bunker, pounded down the companion, shouted "storm," then rushed on deck again. The spell which held them was broken.

Soutar straightened up and lowered his gun. In the last few minutes he had failed to notice that it had now become almost completely dark in the cabin. This long-shot chance had come home. He must go on deck at once, before the weather broke. A jerk of his revolver motioned Fu up the companionway ahead of him.

Val was still standing at the rail, her revolver trained on the brig's boat. Soutar escorted Mister Fu to the side. The girl did not look at him as they approached.

Mister Fu's feet found the bottom boards of his boat. His boat's crew, alarmed at the signs, pushed off immediately. Malignance in his look, Fu called out above the noise of the rising wind.

"I'll keep that appointment with you yet, Soutar. And with the girl, too."

Already the wind was high, and the sea was hunching itself into ridges, foam-tipped and dangerous. Dense, black clouds hung low, sullenly, threatening. Immediately Fu's boat had sheered off Val had put the cutter before the wind, and they were now getting along at a fast rate, racing the gathering seas that chased them. Tommy and Bunker were trying to shorten sail. Soutar joined them, bellowing orders in order to be heard above the rising howl of the gale. The lightning flashed out, tearing a jagged rip in the heavens. The Kid, in its flash,

noticed Val at the tiller, still in her thin cotton clothes. Snatching a few seconds, he grabbed up a tarpaulin and covered her with it as best he could. He had just finished when the storm broke.

The shock of it seemed to lift the cutter out of the water. Her canvas blew out with a noise like a volley of smallarms. The tiller was jerking madly, threatening to throw the girl across the deck. Soutar took it from her, forcing her down into a position where she would get at least a little shelter. There was nothing to do but run before it.

Again the lightning tore across the clouds, followed by the crash of thunder. The sudden glare revealed everything clearly. The deck forward was deserted, the two boys having evidently dived below. The tattered canvas was standing straight out before the wind. The sea appeared as range after range of grey, white-capped hills. The flickering out of the lightning left the darkness more intense.

The cutter was pitching like an unbroken olt; her deck awash, as wave after wave broke over her. Soutar could hardly control the kicking tiller. Drenched with spray, he stood with feet well apart, as if clamped to the boards. Lost to everything else, he was glorying in the fight. If he went, well, it was a good clear finish; different from several others that he had missed very narrowly. . . .

This mood passed as he thought of Val. He was surprised to find her standing at his side, clinging to a stanchion. As the lightning flared out again he saw that, although she was white, her head was thrown back and her pose dauntless.

The Kid stooped to make himself heard above the shrieking of the storm.

"Good little boat—don't worry."

Early in the night their mast went by the board. The thud of it against the cutter as she tossed put the first sign of fear into Soutar. He howled curses at the boys for not coming out to cut away the wreckage, curses that were torn away from his lips by the gale as soon as they were uttered. He looked down as he felt a tug at his sleeve. Val was shouting to him. He caught enough to gather that she wanted to go forward and drive the boys out to clear the mast. Even in the darkness he could distinguish the resolute fearlessness of her bearing. He shook his head, pointing to the rush of water across the deck, but she took no notice, commencing to edge away.

Soutar grabbed at her, holding the tiller with one hand, and managed to catch hold of the sodden fabric of her dress. She turned on him, shouting something he couldn't catch. He saw her looking and pointing behind him. And then it seemed as if a giant hand hit the rudder with a sledge-hammer. The tiller was torn out of his hand and banged back, smashing across his wrist. Before he had time to realise the pain, however, he was buried beneath what appeared to be tons of water. He managed to retain his hold on the girl's clothes. Together they rolled on the deck under the seething torrent.

His lungs seemed to be bursting as he fought desperately to regain his feet. It was Val who helped him up, and, regardless of the flying spray, he stood there, filling his chest with the glorious air. The tiller was banging to and fro, but when he stepped to it he found that he could only use one hand. The other was helpless and the pain from his wrist was shooting up the forearm. Val saw, and without a word stepped to his side and seized the tiller. So they stood, the combined strength of both holding the cutter before the wind.

Portions of that interminable night Soutar remembered vividly. There were, however, parts of it which, later, a black veil seemed to separate from his consciousness. The pictures that remained with him were mainly of huge, sweeping seas, of black clouds showing up, scudding before the gale, as the lightning ripped across the

sky; and, once, a fleeting glimpse of the moon.

But always through the long hours before daylight he was aware of the girl who shared the fight with him; aware, not only of her presence, but of the indomitable courage that radiated from her.

Just before dawn the gale subsided as suddenly as it had risen. The Kid was then nearly delirious. His arm, from being so long without attention, was swollen and throbbing. As the first faint stars were showing through the wrack of clouds he collapsed.

When he recovered consciousness the sun was shining down on the deck where he lay. He noted with astonishment that his arm was bound up and quite comfortable. From the motion of the cutter he could tell that there was still a heavy sea running, and he twisted round to see who was at the tiller. It was Tommy. His new position also revealed Val. She had changed into some old top of Headley's and stood amidst the superintending of Bunker's efforts to rig a jury-mast. As Soutar watched her, he marvelled.

By God, what a girl! Recollections of the night returned to him. He recalled the courageous way she had faced the storm with him, the long hours she had stood at the tiller by his side. A vision of her, as the lightning had revealed her, flashed into his mind. He saw again the slim form braced against the wind, the mouth firm and the eyes puckered, wet hair blowing in the gale.

He lay there dreaming, revelling in the early morning warmth of the sun and the comfort of his arm, after the pain he had felt before passing out. He heard Val advancing towards him and propped himself up to greet her. She came along the deck with the sun glinting through her golden hair, a smile beaming for him.

"Morning, Jimmy. How's the arm?"

"Morning, Jimmy. How's the arm?" Soutar started to rise, helping himself with his left arm, but she stopped him with an authoritative gesture.

"The arm's O.K.," he replied. "Thanks to you. But what happened after I made an ass of myself?"

She laughed.

"Well, I managed until things got quieter, and the boys came out. Tommy got the wind up towards morning, and cut away the mast. But, of course, that was before you caved in."

Soutar nodded.

"And now," Val concluded, "I'm just getting things into shape a bit."

She was moving off when the Kid scrambled awkwardly to his feet and stayed her.

"Listen, Val," he stammered, "I can't tell you how much I think of you for last night. Looking after the cutter, when I made a goat of myself, and fixing up my arm, and, and all," he ended lamely.

She did not smile. Her eyes regarded him seriously.

"Don't be foolish, Jimmy. You were wonderful, the way you got us out of the mess with Fu. And afterwards I . . ."

She did not finish, but turned on her heel and hurried off.

She recommenced directing Bunker's efforts on the jury mast.

Later in the day they once more had cause to praise the absent Headley's efficiency and care: tucked away forward they discovered a spare suit of sails, a heavy weather suit, Val said. By late afternoon they had reduced sail set and were making fair progress to the south. No sign had been observed of the brig. As Soutar sat at the tiller, after sending Val down for the sleep she so badly needed, he breathed a fervent hope that Mister Fu and his ruffianly crew might have foundered in the previous night's blow.

The storm had carried them well south. That night, sitting in the cabin, while Tommy relieved at the wheel, Val calcu-

lated that four or five days of favorable wind, even with their present make-shift rig, should bring them into the track of shipping bound to or from Suva. She was not far out in her reckoning. The afternoon of the sixth day, Bunker pointed out a sail astern of them. It proved to be a fast-sailing brigantine, an island trader, by the look of her.

In response to their signals, she approached close enough for a shouted conversation to be held. Her skipper informed them that she was the Spindrift, bound for Suva. He reckoned that, if the wind held, he would make port in three days, offered to take them aboard and run a tow-line on to the cutter. A look sufficed for Val and Soutar to settle the matter: it was no fun sailing a disabled boat that distance; it might take them a couple of weeks. They accepted.

CHAPTER 9.

THE Spindrift arrived at Suva within the three days predicted by her skipper. For Val and Soutar these were three days of rest and calm, all the more enjoyable by reason of the danger and anxiety that had preceded them. Tommy and Bunker stayed aboard the cutter, which plunged along in the brigantine's wake at the end of a long tow-rop, aided by the temporary jib and mains'l.

Old Dan Swift, captain and owner of the Spindrift, they found to be one of those characters who can only be discovered in out-of-the-way corners of the globe. He must have been well over seventy; in fact, he claimed to have been sailing the Pacific for close on sixty years. He spoke familiarly of blackbirds, pearls, and traders once known from Cape York to Honolulu. He said, too, that he had been with Bully Hayes—a much maligned man, according to him.

Whatever his past, he was comfortably off now, so he said. He liked talking about his early days, when every pound had to be fought for, and the fighters were regular he-men. Not, his sweeping gesture conveyed terrific disdain, the weak-gutted nincompoops one met about the islands nowadays.

Soutar enjoyed it all hugely. Val called Old Dan a "dear." The old man put them ashore at Suva with an urgent invitation to spend as much time as they liked with him on any occasion they might be in Honolulu, where he now had his home. They stood together and watched, regretfully, the boat that carried him back to the brigantine.

About them was the usual throng of stalwart Fijians, there to meet the recently-berthed steamer. Fine, handsome fellows they were, with carefully tended mops of bushy hair, red at the edges by reason of the lime with which they treated it, and clad in white or brightly-colored aulus. Coming into the harbor they had not had time to notice much except the hills behind the town; a mass of brilliantly green foliage, dotted with half-hidden bungalows. Further back the hills grew purple. Dominating them again were double-peaked Korababa and that strangely-shaped crag, Jocke's Thumb. Above the babble of native tongues and the hiss and clatter of the winch on the steamer unloading nearby, came the deep, hollow boom of the surf on the coral reef.

Moved by the strangeness of it and by the sudden return to a civilized community after the weeks spent on the Alina and alone on the island, both Val and Soutar were silent for a space.

A Canadian and Australasian R.M. steamer was taking on cargo just beyond the shabby tramp discharging near them. To the right, a little way out, a lovely little brig swung tranquilly at anchor, her square yards a challenge to the more popular fore and aft rig of the half-dozen

shapely schooners, dreaming, Narcissus-like, above their own reflections. Launches darted about like water midges, their speediness and grace enhanced by the sluggish lighters that went to and from the shore. Native craft, with outriggers and outlandishly shaped sails, flitted to and fro on their mysterious business.

Val turned at last to Soutar with shining eyes.

"Oh, Jimmy!" she said breathlessly. "Did you think it was going to be like this?"

He smiled, watching her as she lifted her head, sniffing delicately.

"What a lovely scent. Did you smell it, Jimmie?"

"Smell it!" Soutar was very emphatic. "A man'd have to be without a nose not to. These Fijians seem to stink more than anything I've ever met. Smelt 'em before we even got on the wharf."

Val turned up her nose at him.

"Not that, silly! Something quite different. There!"

A puff of breeze came down from the hills to feather the calm water of the harbor, and on its wings it brought a transient, rich fragrance of jasmine. Impossible to believe that anything could have conquered the thick odor of sweating natives on the wharf, but they had the experience. Later, loitering among the bungalows back on the hill, they were to see walls and verandahs a riot of white and yellow jasmine blossoms; to breathe again that perfume, which would carry them back to their first day in Suva.

They could not, however, remain there indefinitely waiting for another scented breeze to reach them. Suddenly Soutar realised that they had been landed here in a strange town with no baggage and no knowledge of the place, except the hint given them by Old Dan to put up at the Grand Pacific. Fortunately, Val had money. When she had rushed back to the store for her automatic before taking refuge on the cutter, she had been calm enough to parcel up hastily one or two toilet necessities and a leather wallet in which she kept her money.

Through the open gates of the wharf Soutar saw a small line of open carriages—just what they were he could not say, except that two were hooded buggies. The horses drowsed in the sun while their masters gossiped as they waited for fares. Soutar touched the girl's arm lightly.

"Well, we'd better go and get you fixed up first, I suppose. What do you think? Book a room at the Grand Pacific first so that you can have a wash and so on, and then go out and do a bit of shopping?"

Val nodded.

"Yes, I think so," she smiled suddenly. "That's if they'll take us in without any luggage."

Soutar grinned back at her.

"I don't think they'll make any trouble about that. We're not in Sydney, you know, and you're not trying to book in at the Hotel Australia."

Immediately they passed through the gates the dawdling, gossiping cab-drivers came to life and besieged them. Good-humoredly the Kid forced his way to one of the buggies, helped Val in and climbed in himself.

"Grand Pacific," he ordered.

Across the road, just at the foot of the wharf, they passed the native bazaar, smelling to high heaven and loud with the vociferations of sellers of fruit and coral, Fijians bargaining with would-be purchasers of their finely-woven baskets of all sizes and colors, artists who carved and sold implements of all kinds, open-air merchants who specialised in fans, necklaces of berries, or sea shells, and craftsmen who displayed their skill in the decorating of 'whales' teeth.

"Hell of a noise!" Soutar grumbled. But he did not gainsay Val's enthusiasm when,

with shining eyes, the girl said that they MUST come down here later and spend an hour or two in the bazaar.

In spite of the fact that the Kid was already preoccupied with many things that had to be done—locate the Alicia, re-establish contact with Udall and others—he did not attempt to hurry the journey. It was very pleasant, that drive along Victoria Parade. On one side the row of shops and buildings gave a reassuring feeling of safety, comfort, while the harbor front, on the other, afforded a view of sun-flecked water and high-masted sleeping ships. The weeping-bigs and rain trees, that lined the esplanade, with their hanging branches of the latter, with their hanging foliage spanning the roadway, made their progress, after the hard glare of the wharf, appear to be through a cool, green twilight. They passed the Town Hall and the Library, coming at last to the Grand Pacific.

Soutar alighted and helped Val down. He instructed the driver to wait, while he took Val aside.

"You'll be O.K. now?" he asked the girl. She looked at him, eyes wide with surprise.

"But you're coming in."

Soutar shook his head.

"Hardly. Haven't got a bean. In fact," his irrepressible grin broke out. "I'll have to borrow ten bob of you, so that I'll be able to pay off this cabbie when I get back to the wharves."

Val protested.

"No, I'm afraid I really can't, Val. It's very nice of you, but," he checked her projected interruption. "I don't think it would be wise at the moment. I must find out where Udall is and, when I do that, I'll be able to get money and see what he plans for me to do."

"But," Val flashed, "Udall mayn't be in Suva."

"I think he's here," the Kid said.

Val looked at him, from under lowered lids.

"Oh," she said noncommittally, and then. "All right, we'll leave it at that for the time being. But, Jimmy, you'll have to see me to-night to let me know what is happening. Suppose we meet at six o'clock. Where?"

The Kid thought swiftly. Six o'clock. Yes, that should give him plenty of time. He nodded.

"O.K. Suppose we meet in front of the boys' school. You know, just down the road."

"Yes, I know. I'll meet you there, then."

She looked him full in the eyes again.

"You'll be careful?"

Soutar looked surprised.

"Careful?" he said: "of what?"

"Well," Val said slowly. "There's that business you ran away from in Sydney. You can't tell, they may know about it here. Police cable to one another sometimes, don't they?"

She did not wait for him to reply, but turned abruptly to leave him. The Kid called her and, when she stopped, reached her side in one stride.

"Sorry, Val, I'll have to borrow that half-sovereign from you to pay for our joy-ride."

"Oh! I'm sorry, Jimmy."

"Thanks. Look after yourself," he said. Then he was gone, and the buggy was moving off through the grounds that separated the hotel from the parade.

Standing on the wide, cool verandah, Val watched it go, wishing that she could find some answer to the questions that had cropped up in her mind during the past month, all of which concerned Mister Jimmy Soutar.

That gentleman, as he sat back on the uncomfortable padding of the buggy seat, en route for the wharves again, was asking himself some questions. Oddly enough, the one that caused him most perplexity had to do with the charming Miss Val Blakely and her immediate future. Mister Soutar smelt trouble ahead, and had every intention, if such a thing were possible, of getting Val safely out of the way.

The steady jog-trot of the decrepit old animal drawing the buggy brought him back to the Town Hall. Beyond this were the Pacific Cable Offices. Here Soutar alighted and paid off his driver, electing to walk the rest of the way to the wharves. He wondered what would be the best way to obtain news of the Alicia. Of course, he could always telephone the harbor authorities, but there were many reasons for not wishing officialdom to know there was anybody in the colony particularly interested in Udall's schooner. He decided to see what information he could get on the waterfront, before trying other sources. He was sure to pick up somebody who could give him a few particulars to go on with. In that small place, a strange boat coming in would have been sure to be noticed and discussed.

About a hundred yards away from the wharf gates, through which he and Val had emerged so short a time before, Soutar struck the very type he wanted. A skipper of one of the island traders lying out in the harbor was walking with alcoholic precision towards the wharves, where, no doubt, a boat was waiting to take him off. Soutar drew abreast of him.

"Excuse me, captain," he ventured.

The other stopped and stood swaying slightly, regarding him out of bloodshot, slightly-glazed eyes.

"Well, young feller-me-lad."

"I wonder if you could tell me anything about a schooner I'm looking for. The Alicia, Captain MacQuirk."

"Old Mac!" The stranger started to laugh, deep guffaws that rumbled up from the depths, causing him to wipe his blood-shot eyes until a violent hiccough cut him short. "Old Mac!" he repeated, and then pointed out beyond the foam-marked line of reef. "There's Old Mac," he said, trying hard to control his laughter. "Lying out there off Nukulan, cursing like hell. Been quarantined for two—three weeks and they tell me now that his ship was clean all the time. Alicia, isn't she? Nice little boat. I'm told they're giving her a clean bill to-day; that means he'll be inside here in an hour or two. But, man, think of Mac's face when they told him, after hanging him up out there all this time, that there's nothing wrong."

The joke was too rich. His mirth got the upper hand again and continued until another round of hiccoughs put an end to it. Soutar was grinning widely in sympathy. Recovering from the attack, the owner of this exquisite sense of humor addressed Soutar again:

"I'm Hanlon," he said, with the air of one giving a name known to all and sundry. The Kid held out his hand.

"Glad to know you, captain," he replied, but did not give his own name, an omission which the no doubt famous Hanlon did not appear to notice.

"Have a drink," he said, producing from his hip-pocket a bottle of gin.

They drank together. Then Soutar accompanied him to the steps at which his boat, manned by two Solomon Island boys, was waiting. Another pause for refreshment occurred here, after which Hanlon climbed down carefully into the stern-sheets. He could not resist a final laugh.

"Old Mac," he said. "Sweating out there for that long with the fear of God in him. Been afraid of sickness ever since I've known him. Can't you see him every

morning, looking for signs of smallpox or something?"

It was too much. He lay back and roared again.

"And then," he managed to get out between spasms, "to learn after all his shivering and worry that everything's all right! Has been all the time."

But, even as his gusts of mirth choked him, forcing Soutar and the boys, by their contagious example, to laugh too, Hanlon wiped his streaming eyes and pointed. There, sailing through the deep-water passage under jib and mains'l, came a schooner.

"There's your Alicia," Hanlon said. "Oh, just wait till I see Mac ashore to-morrow."

He was still muttering over this piece of future enjoyment when his boys backed away from the steps and started to row.

The Alicia made the passage beautifully, sweeping right into the harbor as if she were in mid-Pacific. Coming up into the wind, she hung, canvas flapping loosely, until the anchor plunged heavily into the smooth, coral-sheltered waters. By the time Soutar had engaged a native boatman to take him out, the jib was off her and the hands were already loosely packing the big mains'l about the boom as it came down.

Approaching her, the Kid wondered how Udall had taken that long period of quarantine. Two, three weeks. Hanlon had said. God! The boss would be wild! Outwardly calm, of course, but red-hot inside. Have to go very carefully with him. His thoughts were interrupted by the boat snubbing against the Alicia's side. Everybody must have been too busy to notice his approach. It was not until he had hailed that the mate's face looked over the side and down into the boat. Soutar glanced up at him.

"Hullo, Tolsted," he said calmly. "Throw us a rope, will you?"

A rope came over, snapping onto the bottom boards, and Soutar heaved himself over the schooner's side. Tolsted confronted him in amazement.

"You!" he said. "What . . . ?"

But the Kid did not wait to hear him. Udall and the Frenchman had just come out of the deck-house and he strode towards them. The Frenchman saw him first.

"Sacre non!" he gasped.

Udall looked up at the exclamation. His heavy-lidded eyes opened wide.

"God Almighty!" he said. "The Kid!"

CHAPTER 10.

THE deckhouse was blue with smoke, so that the three men sitting there saw each other dimly. In order that they might talk without fear of being overheard the door and the portholes were closed. The curtains were closely drawn. Udall stubbed the butt of his cigar viciously into the ashtray.

"Well," he said savagely, "the position boils down to this: We've been hung up here for damn near three weeks; haven't been able to do a cursed thing. The Southern Star's been here for two days; scheduled to leave to-morrow, but the doctor out at quarantine tells me she'll be hung up for four, possibly five, days—engine trouble. The only bit of luck we've had." He looked directly at the Kid. "I'd thought we'd miss her. Then we'd have been dished properly. I've got to see . . ." he pulled himself up with the name on the tip of his tongue, "a big gun from San Francisco to finalise arrangements for taking the stuff here, and maybe, linking up with him in the States. This hold-up of the Southern Star lets me out; he couldn't have waited. Besides, we've still got to get a consignment off her. A trial lot of dope we're handling for Val."

Then his frown reappeared.

"On the other hand, there's that yellow snake, Fu!" His fingers drummed a tattoo on the table. "Disappeared, and so has three thousand quid's worth of our stuff. God damn and blast him! It means keeping more men on the island, too."

"Might not," the Kid interjected. "There's a possibility that his brig went down in that gale. You've got no idea how it blew."

From his favorite position on the sofa, the Frenchman joined in:

"We must get rid of this Chinaman. It is most necessary."

The Kid sneered.

"Bah! Why did you not shoot him before you ran from the island? Sacre nom! Had I been there..."

The Kid laughed; Udall did not trouble to look around.

"For God's sake, French, have a bit of sense. The Kid's more use to us alive than if he was cold meat. And that's what he would have been if he'd tried any funny tricks. He did a good job in planting those tins."

The Frenchman subsided, muttering as usual. When Udall admitted the man to the gang the Kid wondered why he tolerated such an unintelligent windbag of a fellow. He knew, now, that the Boss found it convenient to have someone handy, who was as quick with the knife or gun as French; someone who would tackle any job without a quail. Udall's fingers were still drumming rapidly on the table. Suddenly he shot a question at Soutar.

"What're the chances of this Fu turning up here in Suva?"

The inquiry came as a shock; the Kid had never considered such a possibility. Yet, now that Udall mentioned it, the thing did not seem so improbable. The Chinaman had boasted that he only preyed on outlaws. There was no reason on earth why he should not come on to Fiji if he thought that there would be any chance of deriving profit out of Udall's transactions. It was a hundred to one that he had friends in Suva, while Udall has as yet no chance of getting an organisation together there. The cunning Mister Fu, who undoubtedly was fully advised of the situation by Pulstrom, would know that he had the advantage there in any coup he might try to pull off.

Soutar said as much to Udall, adding a rider to the effect that the Chinaman's brig had an auxiliary engine. Consequently if Fu had sailed south either in pursuit of Val and himself, or with some vague hope of picking up information, he would no doubt be there by now. Udall growled savagely at this.

"I hope he is. Friends or no friends, I'll fix him if I sight him. And get back our stuff, too. Leave that to me. We've had more done for us in the way of ground work here than he knows. If Fu's here he's got to be found."

He swivelled round in his chair and spoke to the Frenchman.

"You'd better see Ickerson about it as soon as we go ashore." "Ickerson," he went on to the Kid, "is the man who's been acting here for years for the Frisco organisation. There's not much that boy can't find out. And when he finds your Mister Fu..."

His voice ceased abruptly, but the savage gesture with the hands was more expressive than any words could have been.

The Frenchman rose from the sofa and stretched.

"I should like to have the pleasure of what do you call it? fixing the clock, yes? for this Monsieur Fu very shortly. And now I think I shall go ashore and see our good friend Ickerson. Then..." he turned to the Kid, trying hard to keep his voice friendly, "where did you say Miss Val is staying?"

"Grand Pacific," the Kid replied shortly.

"And I don't think she's too anxious to see you."

The Frenchman's eyes half closed as he stopped in his progress to the door.

"You do not think so, hein? But that is something we shall leave to the lady herself to decide. I have much to tell her."

"Shut up!" Udall interrupted. "And sit down again. D'you think everything's fixed up already. And listen, both of you! I'll have no more arguing about that Jane, see? Leave her alone, or you'll both be buying trouble. Understand?"

"O.K., Boss," the Kid said amiably.

The Frenchman nodded sullenly and returned to his reclining posture on the sofa. Udall bent over the table to Soutar.

"Now you, Kid. You'll come ashore with us and meet Ickerson. You'll have to know him, although, after we leave, you'll act for us here. See? You'll have nothing to do with him, unless you want anything, until we finalise arrangements for the Frisco business. Then you'll deliver the stuff to him from the Alicia for him to send on. Of course, I was forgetting, you'll be acting for the girl, too," a swift half-smile flitted across his face, "so you'll take dope from him as he gets it in, and then re-ship on the Alicia for Sydney."

"We'll go ashore together, see Ickerson, and then go on to where you've got to pick up Val. The four of us can go to one of the pubs—not the Grand Pacific; we don't want to be seen together more than we need—and you can hear anything final the girl wants to tell you. That means finish, as far as we're concerned. I've already told you what you'll do here. There's no point in advertising the fact that you're anything to do with this hooker. I'll set you up, as far as money's concerned. You can take a room at McDonald's Hotel. When we've gone you can move over to the Grand Pacific. Might as well be in the swell place; never know who you'll meet there, who'll come in handy later. That's all, I think."

Udall rose as if ready to move out to the deck. Soutar interrupted him:

"What about this stuff you've got on the Southern Star? Can't I give you a hand to get it off?"

Udall shook his head.

"No. We've got someone on board, one of the stewards. French is looking after the rest. At any rate, we're not doing anything with that to-night if the ship's not going out for four days. The later we leave it the better; the stuff's safe where it is. Besides, French and I've got to see this man from Frisco to-night..."

"How about taking me along, Udall?" the Kid asked.

Udall shot a quick glance at him from underneath lowered lids.

"What do you want to come for? Getting curious?"

"No," the Kid said easily. "No. But it might be a good idea for me to know all the boys. Might be handy in the future."

The Boss shook his head decisively.

"No. You'll keep your nose out of this. You'd never see this man again and there's no point in your seeing him now. He wouldn't like it, nor I wouldn't either. Coming, French?"

He took another cigar from his pocket as the Frenchman rose, bit off the end, and fumbled for matches. The Kid threw a box over to him, studying his face. The match flared, revealing tight-clenched, heavy jaws bent over the flame, thin, compressed lips and hooded eyes.

"Thanks," Soutar said, as the matches came back to him.

"This big gun from Frisco. Going back to the States in the Southern Star is he?" Soutar asked casually, exhaling smoke into the thick atmosphere.

"Yes," Udall said shortly.

"Couldn't you have met him in Sydney? The Southern Star's just come from there, hasn't she?"

They were at the cabin door when he asked. Udall stopped.

"Listen, Kid. You've always been a damn sight too curious. One of these days you're going to ask a question that somebody won't like; then you'll be in dutch. Properly. Just for once, I'll tell you. This man's been in Suva ten days. Came here to meet me and plans to travel back on the Southern Star. Want to know any more?"

"No," Soutar said.

"Maybe that's just as well," the Boss replied.

They stepped out on deck into the bright glare of the afternoon. Gulls poised and plunged. Above their raucous cries and the shrill shouting of a group of Solomon Islanders passing under the schooner's stern in an outrigger came the insistent, perpetual boom of the surf. A schooner lying to starboard was preparing to put to sea. Her white sails jerked up the spiring mast and shivered in the breeze.

Tolsted already had a boat over the side. As Udall and the others appeared, he snapped an order that sent two of the crew, lounging up near the foc'sl, to row them to the wharf.

Close in to the wharf Udall ordered the men at the oars to cease rowing. While one of them made a pretence of fiddling with a rowlock, the Boss took in the position of the Southern Star, lying nearby. Her long bulk lay along the wharf. All her passengers, it seemed, were ashore. At that hour, late afternoon, there were no signs of life on her decks. Even her winches were silent; her big derricks stretched motionless over the hatches. The low rows of portholes, with the golden glint of the sun in them, were like so many eyes, peering hotly from the dullness of her steel side. These, and the thin plume of smoke worming up from her after funnel, were the only things that gave her vitality.

Udall eyed her, drawing on his cigar with satisfaction.

"Just nice, French," he said softly. "You should have no trouble getting the stuff over to the Alicia!"

The Frenchman's cigarette hissed as he dropped it into the water.

"None. From one of the lower decks, Ickerson said. Oh, I think it will be easy, very easy."

"Mm," Udall scratched his chin. "Should be. Don't forget we'll have to find out definitely from Ickerson just where to expect it from. Well, seen all you reckon you want to see? She'll be lit up at night, at any rate, I suppose. If she isn't, you'll notice that that group of three small wharf lights is about fifty yards to the left of her stern. Bear away from them a bit when you leave the Alicia and you'll find her all right. Go on, give way."

The last was to the carman. While the boat was covering the remaining distance to the wharf, the Kid leant back wondering about Udall. This time, his admiration was called forth by the easy way in which Udall had adapted himself to a new environment. So far as Soutar knew, and he had worked with the Boss for a number of years, the latter had never been to sea before this. Yet he was perfectly at home on the Alicia. Either on the schooner, or here in a ship's boat, he could use the terms and expressions of those of whose language they had formed part for years. A small matter, perhaps, Soutar mused, but characteristic of the man.

The far, as the boat bumped gently against the steps, interrupted his reverie. The Frenchman, light as a cat, was already ashore. Udall followed more heavily, and then the Kid. Udall signed one of the two men of the crew, who had been rowing, to join them. To the other he gave instructions.

"Take the boat back to the Alicia. Tell

the mate to have somebody here with a boat at midnight. No later. The boat's to wait until we get here; that's if we're not on time. Get me?"

The fellow nodded and shoved off. The other four mounted up to the wharf proper. Here Udall sent the Frenchman and Soutar on, retaining the man he had brought ashore.

"You two wait for us at the gate," he said. "There's something I want to say to Harry, here."

They hadn't long to wait. Very soon the boss came up to them, as they stood smoking. The man, Harry, was still with him. It seemed to Soutar that the latter grinned at him slyly, as he ranged himself alongside. Udall jerked a thumb towards Harry.

"Little playmate for you," he said to Soutar, with a glint of ironic humor in his eye. "You'd find it uncomfortable on your own in a strange town. Harry can stay with you, until we leave, or," he waved towards the towering funnels of the Southern Star, "until she sails."

He watched the Kid's face, adding after a pause.

"Too curious, you are, Kid. And I know you're tricky. But I'll see to it that you don't get anything over me. You'll be all right when you settle down, but you might have ideas about getting hold of something to balance what we know about you."

He smiled, and the Frenchman laughed maliciously.

Soutar's face was expressionless.

"All right, Udall. If you feel that way about it. But you're wrong. After all, I'm back with you again, aren't I?"

Udall did not consider that the matter called for any further comment. The four walked over to the line of hire carriages. The horses, slouching between the shafts, were drowsily flicking the flies off themselves with languid sweeps of the tail. Opposite them, the native bazaar was still alive with noise and color.

The Kid was just following the Frenchman into the conveyance they had hired, when a tall, white clad figure, moving among the dark-skinned, singlet and sulu clad throng opposite, caught his eye. He stopped, one foot on the step, the other on the road, staring incredulously.

"Mon Dieu!" the Frenchman exclaimed. "Are you then, never coming?"

Soutar disregarded him, keeping his eyes fixed on the man in white duck trousers, white open shirt and straw sandals, who appeared to be bargaining with a tall, mop-haired Fijian over a polished walking-stick. Suddenly the man in white looked up and across to where Soutar was standing as if petrified. All doubt vanished.

It was the gentle Mister Fu!

CHAPTER 11.

"COME on, Kid," Udall said sharply. "What are you waiting for?"

Then his eyes followed the Kid's gaze, and he stiffened.

"Who's that?"

"Fu!" Soutar said in a low voice. "Don't know whether he's seen me or not."

The Frenchman gave voice to a string of boulevard oaths, nearly pushing the Kid over in his effort to get out of the carriage. Udall pulled him back violently.

"God damn and blast you! Keep under cover, can't you. Think we can afford to let him see us with the Kid? He doesn't know us; wouldn't if he bumped into us in the street, and we don't want him to." His voice took on a lower, more savage, note. "But we know him now, by God!"

The Frenchman was fidgeting, glaring from the darkness of the vehicle to where

Mister Fu, apparently unconscious of Soutar or his companions, still haggled with the big Fijian.

"But, non, d'un non! Why can't I follow him? The opportunity should occur . . ." the Frenchman was babbling on. "I have my knife. . . ."

"Yes?" Udall's voice was coldly sceptical. "And where'll you go if you do cut his throat? Back to the Alafia? Like hell you will! I'm not going to have the whole Suva police force poking around on the schooner just for letting you rip a Chow up. No. . . ." He spoke to the Kid, urgently now, as the Chinaman gave signs of moving off. "You'll have to follow him, Kid. It doesn't look as if he's picked you. Find out where he's hanging out, and I'll do the rest." He paused, meditating savagely.

"O.K." Soutar said. "But I'll take your gun, Udall; mine's on the cutter. I'm taking no chances. Fu mightn't be as scared as we are of killing. He'll have his own places to duck to, I'll lay odds."

Udall's gun was thrust into his fist.

"There," the Boss said. "Down south with it. Now hurry! He's going."

As the Kid waited cautiously he heard Udall's final instructions.

"Phone me at Ickerson's. We'll wait there until we hear from you. Find out where that swine goes, that's all."

The last sentence was lost on the Kid. He had taken advantage of the Chinaman's preoccupation in trying to avoid a bunch of laughing, white-toothed Samoans, and was already over the roadway mingling with the motley crowd in the bazaar.

Mister Fu, successfully negotiating the group of natives blocking his way, sauntered slowly on. Occasionally he paused, now to examine a carved whale's tooth and now to finger a large sheet of tappa, fine as linen, held up for his inspection by a smiling Tongan woman. The clamor and the stink of the place did not appear to discommodate him at all. He moved with the similes of one who has nothing definite to do and can think of no better manner of passing time. The Kid followed in his wake, camouflaging his real purpose by halting, when the Chinaman halted, and engaging in scraps of argument with shrill-voiced vendors anxious to sell him anything from fantastic and beautiful sprays of coral to feather-edged mats.

The Chinaman at length worked his way to the edge of the bazaar and stood for a moment as if meditating his next move. He drew a watch from his pocket and looked at the time. It was apparently later than he thought, for all signs of indecisive wandering left him. Pocketing his watch, he commenced walking briskly, leaving the bazaar behind him and directing his steps towards the native quarter. In his heel-less, grass sandals he moved, with no effort at all, at a surprising pace; Soutar had to step it out to keep within distance of him without breaking into a trot.

With not a glance behind him, Mister Fu passed into a thoroughfare which seemed to lead into the heart of an area appropriated by the natives. The Kid was close on his heels, frightened of losing him in the polyglot crowd. Although Soutar did not know it, and could not have appreciated its mysteries just then, he was in the famous All Nations Street.

Here walked young, barefooted Fijians, good humored and smiling, clad in the inevitable singlet and sulu. Big, powerful Samoans, ideal material for soldiers, judging by their physique, went past, some of them carrying the washing that proclaimed their profession. Smaller than the Fijians, but quick and alert, Solomon Islanders jostled Indian coolies; little, slender fellows these, who were snatching a little time off from their work to walk abroad with their women, the latter a blaze of color and cheap jewelry. An occasional white, tourist probably, passed in this colorful crowd, his spot-

less drill strangely out of place in the changing drift of outlandish costumes.

Separated by about twenty feet, they threaded their way through the chattering, laughing crowd. Fu went some distance along this street before he turned abruptly to the left along a narrow, twisting laneway, and disappeared. Here the Kid encountered difficulty. The laneway was deserted; there were no natives to disguise pursuit. There was no sign of Mister Fu, either. But this was not strange, as about ten yards down from where it debouched on All Nations Street the lane turned abruptly to the left again. Moreover, the Chinaman's grass slippers made it impossible to trace his progress. Momentarily the Kid hesitated. Then, with a quick movement to assure himself that his gun was lying handy in his coat pocket, he followed.

Again, at the point where the lane twisted to the left, he paused. He cursed, as a quick glance revealed no trace of his quarry, only another of those maddening turns a few yards further on. It was a queer by-way this. Soutar wondered at the stillness, the air of sleeping quietness about the squalid native houses. There were not even the usual naked children playing about.

It occurred to him that this would be one of those streets which only awake at night, whose inhabitants carry on their traffic with the rill-raff of the town and curiosity-mongers among the tourists. From dark till dawn they ply their wares, then retire until another night descends. No doubt later in the evening these houses would echo with a hectic gaiety of their own. But Soutar felt only a sinister gloom issuing from them.

He turned another corner. The lane continued to twist, as if laid out by a drunken sailor. Still no sign of Fu. Soutar stood deliberating. The thing seemed hopeless. For all he knew, the Chinaman might have entered any one of the hovels he had just passed. Well, he'd try one more bend in the lane. If he could see no trace of Fu then, Udall would have to put up with another disappointment. Abandoning the caution that had characterized his movements up to now, he stepped out boldly, rounded the next corner. And stopped dead.

Before he could step back, something flashed past him and thudded into the post against which he was standing, pinning his sleeve to it. A low laugh came from across the lane. Mister Fu stepped out from behind the angle of the wall that had partially hidden him. Soutar wrenched his sleeve free and dived for his pocket, but before his instant impulse to draw his gun and shoot could translate itself into action the Chinaman's voice came, mocking and reproachful.

"I should not do anything spectacular but silly if I were you, Mister—er—Soutar."

He crossed the few yards that separated them, while Soutar awaited him, right hand still in his pocket, folded about the cool metal of his automatic.

"So we meet again, my friend," Mister Fu said, still maintaining a mask of jesting friendliness. "You seemed quite anxious to see me. Let me think," he pretended to consider. "You followed me through the bazaar, along All Nations Street, and finally down here. Now why was that, I wonder? Could it be that you and your friends in the carriage wish to find out where my poor and inadequate dwelling is situated? Was that it?"

Through the narrowed lids his eyes bored into the Kid's, seeming to penetrate and read every thought flashing through the latter's mind. This devil, Fu! Soutar was thinking. He knows what Udall is after. His heart seemed to take up the message; he knows, he knows, it thumped. Soutar tried to keep all sign of his feelings from his features.

"Listen, Fu," he said evenly. "You're a rotten bad knife-thrower. You missed my throat by feet. I know you've got a gun

somewhere handy, but don't try to do anything with it or I'll plug you. Don't forget, I can shoot through my pocket."

The Chinaman laughed softly.

"And you imagine that I aimed at your throat?" he asked. "My very young friend, had I done that you would not be talking to me now." His voice lost its playfulness. A malevolent look displaced the calm friendliness.

"No," he continued. "Very soon I shall give myself that pleasure, but not to-day. One reason is that I do not like witnesses to my killings. Your friend Udall must think a lot of you. He protects you well."

He waved a hand towards the last corner the Kid had negotiated before reaching this one. The Kid looked behind him and, seeing nothing, gazed at Fu in frank amazement. The latter raised his finely-pencilled eyebrows.

"So you did not know that you, the tracker, were being followed in your turn. That really is funny." He laughed again. "But that person who was standing beside you, when you saw me first, has been about ten yards behind you ever since we commenced our little stroll. He looked around the corner there just before I came over to you. Now he's waiting for you to move on again. You forget that your boots make a noise that my slippers don't make."

He broke off, gazing complacently at his feet. Sudden illumination came to Soutar. So Udall had sent Harry after him. He wondered what the Boss had had in mind. Was it merely to have assistance on hand in the event of Fu turning nasty, or was it part of the scheme he had not scrupled to disclose of having the Kid watched until this particular interview he was so anxious about came off and the Southern Star had sailed? Soutar decided that it was probably both. Udall would take no chance on anything happening that might jeopardise his plans. But Mister Fu was speaking again.

"A second reason for extending mercy to you to-day is that I do not wish at the moment to risk having to go into hiding. Had things been otherwise, I should have ignored you when I saw you near the wharf. You showed plainly, however, that you intended watching me. So, rather than keep an important appointment under your eyes, I left a message in the bazaar for the friend I was to meet. I have had a great deal of pleasure in leading you to a place where you could see nothing that would be likely to inconvenience me in the future. I think I rather clever."

Soutar interrupted the low laughter that now rasped his nerves thoroughly.

"Is that so?" he said, his temper beginning to rise. "And what's to prevent me, now that we're here together, putting some lead into you before you can get at your gun. Don't move!" he threatened, as involuntarily the Chinaman moved a hand. "You forgot that, didn't you?"

The other looked at him in silence for a space. Then with a shrug.

"Can you afford to run the risk of having to answer a few questions put to you by the police? Listen! Don't you imagine that there are eyes watching us now from these quiet houses? Half a minute after a shot this lane would be crowded." His laugh came once more, with an ugly note in it now. "I remembered that when I threw my knife. I shouldn't advise you to forget it."

The Kid caught a sudden flicker of movement on his right, where the lane turned again. His head turned quickly, but whatever it had been he saw nothing else.

"Your friend," Mister Fu informed him. "And now I must be going. I shouldn't advise you to follow me any further. I know this place. I could lose you in a minute. But we'll meet again. I haven't forgotten the last little trick you played."

He commenced to walk away silently except for the almost inaudible scuff of his grass slippers. Before he had gone more than a few strides he looked back, saying in a soft voice accompanied by that irritating laugh:

"Tell your friend Udall to be careful with Ickerson. A very cunning fellow, Ickerson. I know."

Then he was gone.

Left alone, Soutar stared at the corner around which Fu had slipped and then wheeled to return the way he had come. It was useless trying to follow him, now that he was aware that a pursuer might be on his heels. Besides, there were other more important matters to attend to, not the most important being to advise Udall of that last reference to Ickerson.

So Mister Fu knew of the gang's connection with this American, did he? How? The Kid brushed the question aside. It was not important. Fulestrom may have had an inkling of it or, quite possibly, Fu had other sources of information. But was his warning about Ickerson sincere or not? The Kid decided that it wasn't; the Chinaman had merely wanted to impress and frighten them with his knowledge of their movements. Also, very probably, to sow the seeds of dissension between Udall and the American that would make his own fishing easier and less dangerous.

Retracing his steps to All Nations Street, Soutar saw no sign of Harry. That smart individual must have heard his returning footsteps and decamped swiftly. He would, no doubt, be lurking somewhere in the throng of the main thoroughfare, waiting to pick up his charge as he came out of the lane. Soutar didn't care much. Harry's presence, whether advertised or not, would not affect his movements now.

Emerging from the comparative gloom of the lane, he glanced at the sun. It must be getting on for five-thirty. He put on a bit more speed. Forcing his way through groups of natives, he arrived back near the wharf a trifle out of breath. Here, he turned to the left, making towards the business section of the town and maintaining a smart pace, until he reached a shop likely to have a telephone. Inquiring within, he was led to the instrument. Left alone, a quick glance around showed him that his conversation would not be overheard. After consulting the directory, he took the receiver off its hook and called a number. The ensuing conversation took a fair time. There were frequent pauses, as if different people were coming to the other end of the line. But, when he hung up the receiver, there was a satisfied look on his face. Further investigations in the directory gave him the second number he wanted and, very shortly, he was talking again.

"Is that Mister Ickerson. . . . No, just tell him a friend of Mister Udall's is phoning."

While this message was being delivered, he leaned against the wall, whistling softly into the telephone and snapping his fingers. He heard somebody speak at the other end and bent over the instrument.

"That you, Udall? . . . Soutar here. . . . The Kid! . . . Yes. . . . No, I didn't. He was awake up to me from the start. . . . How did I know? I was talking to him. . . . Yes, talking. Listen! He said one thing you'll be interested in. . . . What? No, I can't tell you over the phone. . . . The Club? Where is it? . . . How do I get there from here? . . . I'm down near the beginning of Victoria Parade. . . . Yes. . . . Yes. . . . O.K. Well, I'll run along and pick Val up, then we'll meet you at 'The Club' hotel. . . . all right. And, Boss! Remember, I want to have a word with you on your own when we arrive. . . . Right-O. So long."

The receiver clattered into place, Soutar paid for his calls and issued into the street

again, looking around for a cab to take him to the boys' school to meet Val. Strangely enough, as he sat back behind the monotonous clip-clop of the hooves, he was not, for once, thinking of Val or even of his recent encounter with Mister Fu. His mind was busily occupied with Udall, and the mysterious gentleman from America, whom the Boss was to meet that night.

Would it be that night, though? The Kid wondered. Udall had been right in suspecting him of an interest in the big gun from San Francisco. Soutar cursed himself for having given cause for suspicion. Not that he could see how he could have been more off-hand or careful. No, he decided, it was just Udall's instinct for sensing something wrong.

CHAPTER 12

SOUTAR was set down at the Grammar School at five minutes to six. At six o'clock precisely Val appeared walking down from the Grand Pacific. To both of them the meeting seemed to be a reunion after a long separation.

The girl, of course, was eager to know everything that had transpired since they had parted in the morning. The Kid gave her a brief outline of the misadventure that had befallen the Alicia, her providential release from quarantine that day and his meeting and talk with Udall and the Frenchman. When he came to the disclosure of Fu's presence in Suva, Val shuddered.

"Oh, Jimmy!" she exclaimed. "I don't like it. I don't like it at all! I was watching him on the cutter, and he hates you. He'll do anything to revenge himself on you for having outwitted him. Besides. . . ." her eyes were troubled as she paused, gazing into space. Then she resumed, abruptly, "What does Udall think of it?"

"Udall? Well, I think that the Chinaman being here is right into his basket. Udall's not the man to give up three thousand pounds' worth of opium without a fight. Besides, you should know him. If anybody puts anything over him, the Boss isn't the man to complain at finding him again. God help Fu when Udall gets his hands on him, that's all!"

Val, however, did not seem to be entirely satisfied.

"But don't you think that Fu has friends here? More friends than Udall is likely to have at the moment. Jimmy, it's you I'm thinking of mainly."

The Kid shrugged but, careless as the gesture was, his eyes looked down warmly at her.

"Nice of you to feel that way, Val, but don't you worry. I'd a darn sight sooner be on Udall's side against Fu than on Fu's against Udall." He broke away from the subject altogether. "And now, tell me. Did you do all the shopping you wanted to do?"

Val responded to his evident desire to talk of other things. She embarked on a description of her expedition in search of clothes, the Suva shops, and the comfort of being in the Grand Pacific, with its spacious, cool rooms opening out through French windows on to the verandahs that gave a view of leafy Victoria Parade and the blue of the harbor beyond. In spite of the troubled shadows that lurked at the back of her eyes, she was still talking brightly when they arrived at The Club Hotel.

They had reached the entrance and were just passing inside when Soutar, without altering his pace, bent down and said in a low voice:

"Listen Val. This is important. Whatever happens, don't leave the Grand Pacific until I tell you. Don't go any further with

Udall. Disregarding the girl's surprised, questioning look, he hurried on as they crossed the foyer. "You can't do anything for Dick Heatherley . . ."

In spite of herself, the girl's face paled. Before she could ask any one of the clamoring questions, Soutar's cryptic, urgent murmur had awakened, an Indian waiter approached them and they were being shown into the room where Udall, the Frenchman, and a tall, loose-limbed man with a large, sardonic mouth and red-rimmed glasses were waiting. Fortunately for her, the men gave their attention to Soutar first. Even the Frenchman disregarded Val for those first few seconds. Udall was quick to regain his normal composure. Before waving the others to the chairs which were drawn up at the table, he introduced the big man.

"This is Mister Ickerson," he said. "That's Val Ickerson, and the Kid."

Ickerson nodded casually and they seated themselves. Udall turned to the Kid. Soutar told him briefly of the way he had followed Pu up All Nations Street and into the laneway. When he told about the way Pu had played with him by pinning his sleeve with the knife, Udall swore.

"What was the idea. Why not into your throat?"

Udall could not imagine anybody not destroying an enemy when the opportunity occurred. Soutar explained, laying stress, somewhat maliciously, on the presence of Harry in the laneway. Udall didn't turn a hair.

"Yes, I told Harry to go after you," he said. "He got here about half an hour ago. Said you'd been talking to the Chow, but he couldn't hear what you were saying."

Suddenly his suspicious nature presented another possibility to him. He threw a sharp look at Soutar.

"I suppose you haven't done a deal with him, have you?" he rapped out. "Like Fulestrom?"

The Kid felt all eyes boring into him. A scornful smile curved the corners of his mouth.

"Be your age, Udall. He'd cut my throat to music, if he could. You don't know Pu. If I'd been anxious to do a deal with him, don't you think I'd have done it on the island?"

Udall was only half-satisfied, and didn't check the Frenchman, when the latter interrupted.

"And how," the Frenchman demanded, leaning over the table with glittering eyes and thin lips drawn back over his teeth. "are we to know that you did not come to an arrangement there?"

Soutar was unprepared for the new voice that joined in the argument. It was Val's. But Val's as he had never heard it during their association together. Now that she had got back with Udall and the Frenchman, she seemed somehow to have changed. Her voice had a metallic ring as surprising as it was unpleasant. She spoke, not to the Frenchman, but to Udall.

"What's all the wrangling about? You men make me tired. You seem to forget that I was on the island, too. Maybe I'm silly. But there are better ways of being friendly with a man than having a gun fight with him on the beach in the dark or threatening to run him down in mid-ocean. That's the way Pu showed his friendliness. But, perhaps, Soutar didn't tell you about all that!"

Soutar noticed that here, in these new surroundings, she did not call him Jimmy. The crowd had disappeared from Udall's face; but the Frenchman seemed disappointed. Ickerson sat back, smiling quietly.

Udall, once satisfied, did not refer again to the matter. Instead, he leaned forward and addressed Ickerson.

"Getting back to this Pu," he said. "You'll have to help us here, Ickerson. I'm going to get that Chow. When I lay my hands on him, you can take it from me, he'll tell where that stuff of ours is. After that . . ."

He did not finish, but the Frenchman's cruel, catlike grin left no doubt as to what would happen. Ickerson commenced to speak.

"Yes, I know of him. Never had anything to do with him, but I've heard a lot about him. He's been knocking about the Pacific for years. Mysterious guy. I've heard lots of queer tales. Nothing definite. If you know what I mean, but stories of men losing things. Usually guys who wouldn't like to make a complaint about what they lost." He drew at his cigarette and sent a cloud of blue-grey smoke billowing across the room. "He's never interfered with us. Knows too much for that."

Udall nodded. "That so? Got any idea of his hang-outs here?"

Ickerson shook his head.

"No. But I dare say I could find out for you, given a little time."

"All right," Udall said. "Will you get on to it for me? Three thousand quids' worth . . ." he brooded darkly.

Soutar turned to Udall.

"I was just thinking, Boss," he said, "this pub would suit me fine until you go. Then I can move to the Grand Pacific. How about inquiring at the office for a room?"

His eyes caught and held Udall's significantly for the fraction of a second. Udall agreed.

"Might be a good idea. I'll come with you. It might be handy for me to know just where you are in case I want you in a hurry."

The Kid rose and walked out of the room. Udall following.

When the door had closed behind them, Udall stopped.

"Well?" he asked, almost in a whisper. "Ickerson!" the Kid replied, going on to give the text of Pu's last mocking remark.

Udall had a very ugly look on his face, and the Kid noticed that his fists were opening and closing. "By God!" he burst out. "How does that Chow know anything about us being in with Ickerson? Fulestrom didn't know. Somebody in Ickerson's crowd's been blabbing."

He fell silent again, staring darkly at the carpeted floor. Resuming, he said more to himself than to Soutar:

"No, Ickerson's all right. Got nothing to gain by being anything else. Besides, he wouldn't have the guts to buck the American crowd. If Pu started to trouble him, he'd wipe him out like you'd kill a flea between your fingers. But this Chow! We'll have to do something, and do it quick."

Udall and the Kid returned to the room again. Udall turned swiftly to Ickerson.

"Listen to me! You'll have to move quickly. The Kid tells me Pu knows about us working together. Someone in your outfit's been talking."

Ickerson started to protest, but Udall cut him short with a savage gesture.

"No use saying they haven't. They have! You'd better get on to the job, quick. We've got to see—" his quick and suspicious look took in Val and Soutar. "God damn it!" he burst out. "Every cursed thing's gone wrong since that Chow turned up."

He was striding up and down the room now, his brows knotted. He stopped and addressed Ickerson again.

"You'd better get in touch with your boss right away. Call off the meeting with French and me for to-night. Too much of a risk. We'll have to see him before he sails, but we'll locate this Chinaman first

and put him where he won't make any more trouble. It'll be your job to find him. Ickerson, and, if you take my tip, you step smart. Once you know where he is you can leave the rest to French and me."

The Frenchman, who had been sitting with a strained expression listening to Udall, now spoke.

"The stuff on the Southern Star, what do we do about that?"

"We'll have to get that off to-morrow night," Udall replied. "You can alter those arrangements. Ickerson, can't you?"

Ickerson signified that he could. Udall went on, still speaking to him.

"O.K. Well, French can shift that, as we arranged, to the Alicia. That means we'll have to see the big man the night following. That'll give you the best part of two days to locate Pu. Can you do it?"

The American nodded.

"I guess so. Have to work fast. But the organisation's pretty wide."

A silence fell on the room. Udall and Ickerson were thinking, each with his problems to consider and work out. Soutar looked across at Val. She was sitting with lowered eyes. He thought she looked a bit pale. The Frenchman was staring at the girl. His brain was not of the calibre to cope with eventualities. When the time came to deal with Pu, he would spring into action; in the meantime he gave himself up to the lure that Val had always had for him. Soutar saw the expression of lewd hunger in his eyes and ached to smash a fist into his face.

Ickerson scraped back his chair and rose, his long, loose-knit figure seeming to uncoil lazily.

"I guess . . ." He stopped. Udall ceased his prowling walk across the room. They heard the dull noise of booted feet on the carpet on the other side of the door.

Somebody knocked. Even as the five regarded each other questioningly, the door swung open, allowing entrance to a youngish man, an officer of the local constabulary. The newcomer embraced them all in one quick glance. He nodded to Ickerson.

"Ah, Ickerson."

"Afternoon, Wilson."

The policeman's eyes fastened on Soutar. "Are you James Ernest Soutar?"

The Kid nodded, conscious of the fact that Val was looking at him with eyes that seemed full of horror.

"I'd like you to come along to headquarters with me. We have a cable from Sydney that seems to concern you."

As if in quest of some hint of encouragement or assistance, the Kid looked around. But there was no aid to be hoped for here; Udall's eyes were hooded, his face impassive; Ickerson wore a mask of polite concern; the Frenchman did not trouble to conceal his gloating. Val, but Soutar did not want to look at the girl again. He passed out without a word to any of them. The uniformed man, who had come with him, with a perfunctory gesture of farewell, closed the door behind both of them.

CHAPTER 13

VAL BLAKELY sat on the wide verandah outside her room looking across the grounds of the Grand Pacific to Victoria Parade. But her abstracted gaze did not take in the changing picture that presented itself. Her eyes were directed at, but did not see, the laughing natives, Fijians, Solomon Islanders, Indians, and Samoans.

Jimmy! She could not get him out of her mind. For a week now—ever since that night they had faced the storm together on the cutter—she had been trying to tell herself that, really, she did not love him. Her feeling for him, she reasoned, was simply one of comradeship. But now, with

Soutar arrested and long years of prison, perhaps—she blanched—even the rope, ahead of him, she was forced to be truthful to herself. She admitted to herself that he was to her more than a comrade, that she wanted him as she could never want any other man.

She had not slept since they had taken him away; the hours of darkness had been a torture. At first she had been stunned by the suddenness of it all. Then, as her nerves slowly came back to life, she lay tossing in bed, striving fruitlessly to think of some way out of a situation from which escape seemed impossible. The horror of the crime for which Soutar had been arrested did not strike her at all. With the natural instinct of a woman who loves, she was convinced, without thinking of it, that if Jimmy had shot a man, the circumstances must have been different. They must be; it was an accident. The man she loved couldn't have done a thing like that.

Exactly at nine o'clock that morning, she had phoned the police offices in an endeavor to find out where Soutar was, and whether she might see him. Whoever answered would give no information at all. It was with a feeling of utter frustration that she replaced the receiver on its hook. The rest of the morning passed, as had the night, in restless and impotent efforts to evolve some plan, some form of action, that might contain a germ of hope. It had been hopeless.

In an endeavor to relieve her mind of this black oppression she endeavored to think of other things. What had Jimmy meant by that quick, low-voiced reference to Richard Heatherley, just before they had gone in to join Udall? Why had he warned her against Udall, with whom he was working? And what did he know of that Dick Heatherley who had been so much of a motivating force during the last three years of her life? The questions revolved wearily through her brain. Jimmy's words, and the way he had uttered them, confirmed the suspicion she had had now for a long time. Heatherley was dead. A week ago, no, a few hours ago, the thought would have hurt like the cut of a knife, but it didn't seem to matter now. The torture she had undergone and was undergoing through Jimmy's trouble had exhausted her capacity for suffering.

Inevitably she commenced to think once more around Soutar's present situation. There must be some way out if only her deadened mind could light on it. Udall! Couldn't she see him and implore him to help her? Visions of assisting Jimmy to escape, of getting him on board the *Alicia*, and then sailing out of Suva to the wide freedom of the Pacific, passed through her mind. They awakened a spark of hope that was just as speedily extinguished.

Udall would never do it. Impossible to imagine that man of stone jeopardising his own interests to help anyone else. For a moment she considered wildly the idea of threatening to expose Udall's plans to the police unless he did something to help her, but this thought died, too, as quickly as it was born. Udall was not a man who could be bluffed in that way.

At five o'clock she was aroused from the dull agony of thought by a soft-footed servant. Miss Blakely was wanted on the telephone. She hurried inside to take the call, a wild hope springing up in her breast that perhaps everything had come right. Perhaps it was Jimmy who was ringing, or, if not that, Udall to suggest some means of escape. Her hand was trembling violently as she picked up the receiver. Udall's voice came in answer to her "Hello."

"That you, Val?"

"Yes."

"Udall here. Look, Val, I must see you. Can you come down town right away?"

"What is it, Udall? Have you any news of Jim—Soutar?"

The anxiety in her voice was unmistak-

able. There was a pause at the other end of the line. Then Udall spoke again.

"No. We haven't. But I've got to see you. Can you come right away?"

Disappointment struck her like a dagger-wound. For a moment she could not answer. While she leant against the instrument, striving hard to recover herself Soutar's last words to her before they entered The Club Hotel flashed through her mind.

With an effort she summoned up her powers of speech.

"I'm afraid I can't leave the hotel, Udall. I don't feel at all well."

A heavy silence greeted this. She thought she heard Udall, wherever he was, passing on her reply to somebody else. Then her pulses jumped as she seemed to catch another voice, very faintly, saying something about "the Kid." Udall spoke again.

"Listen, Val, I've got to see you. We haven't heard anything about the Kid, but I've got an idea. Can't talk about it over the phone—I wish you hadn't made me mention him; never know who's likely to be listening in. I don't want to be seen around the Grand Pacific; that's why I'm asking you to come down-town. We'll need your help." He paused significantly. "It might be dangerous."

Val did not hesitate. A terrific weight seemed to be lifted off her as if by magic. The blood was racing through her veins. Hope! There was nothing she would not be prepared to do. Her voice rang full and clear when she spoke again.

"I'll come immediately. Where shall I meet you?"

"You'd better be at the wharf gates—you know where I mean, don't you?—say, in an hour. It'll be safer talking over things on the *Alicia* than anywhere ashore. And listen, Val, no hint of where you're going to anyone! We can't afford to take any risks."

"Don't worry about that," he girl said confidently. "At the wharf in an hour."

She hung up. For a moment she stood at the telephone, hardly able to adapt herself to the reaction. It did not seem possible that the complexion of things could have changed so completely, in so brief a time. Yet the low-lying sun now cast a warm radiance over the shrubs and walls. Whereas, before, she could have sworn there had been no sun. To sober herself, she reflected that Jimmy was still in the same position. This thought no longer had the power to depress her. Something was to be attempted; action was to be taken. With the promise of that, her spirits refused to be curbed.

Dressing, she ran swiftly over the means that Udall might have in mind for effecting an escape. She could think of none; but that did not worry her. Udall might have connections of which she knew nothing. Besides, money could do many things. Money? For a second, doubt closed a chilly hand about her heart. Why should Udall spend money on Soutar? Reassurance came with the thought that the gang might not be without fear themselves, while the Kid was a prisoner. He knew too much and to mitigate his own lot might talk!

Driving down Victoria Parade, she fretted at the slowness of her progress. The ambulating horse seemed to relish the cool shade of the spreading rain trees, under which they passed, and the native driver was disinclined to hurry him. Val ached to take whip and reins and achieve a speed more in keeping with her impatience. She mastered herself, only betraying her excitement by a nervous opening and shutting of her bag. They reached the wharf at ten to six. Udall was waiting for her.

Although she was not aware of it, this fact, in itself, gave evidence of something important in the wind. Udall never waited for anyone. Any appointments that he

made he kept, strictly to the minute, expecting the other party to do the same. But he, Udall, hung around waiting for no man—or woman. He greeted Val with a smile and, another rare thing, helped her down on to the road. Small courtesies also were not in his line. The girl looked about her.

"Where's French?" she inquired.

Udall darted a quick glance at her.

"Oh, he's doing something," he said casually. "Why?"

"Nothing. Only he always seems to be with you. It's funny not to see him here."

Udall laughed.

"Yes, French sticks pretty close. You don't like him much, do you, Val?"

The question was unexpected. Her cheeks reddened slightly under the warm gold of her skin.

"Oh," she hesitated, then looked at Udall frankly. "No, I don't. He's . . . " she groped for the correct word, "dirty. It's hard to explain. The way he looks at you . . . No, I don't like him," she repeated, adding, "But still, that's neither here nor there. It won't interfere with business."

"No," Udall said. "It won't interfere with business."

His voice sounded strange, somehow. Val experienced a vague feeling of alarm. It passed swiftly, however, as he went on to speak in his usual unmoved tones of Soutar and the events of the previous day. As they walked to the steps leading down to the harbor, he hinted at a plan he had for getting the Kid out, something desperate, a hundred to one chance. . . .

A boat was waiting for them at the foot of the steps. Val seated herself in the stern, moving over to make room for Udall. She was on fire to reach the *Alicia*, to hear details and to learn the part she was to play. Udall continued to talk, as they were being rowed across the calm water of the harbor. She did not hear him, any more than she heard the raucous screaming of the gulls, swooping and diving against the brazen splendor of the sunset.

She was aroused from her thoughts by the bump of the boat against the schooner's side. Udall helped her up the ladder, which was the only means of gaining the deck. For the first time for four weeks, she was on the *Alicia*'s deck again.

Strangely enough, no member of the crew was to be seen; the ship seemed to be deserted. A few strides brought them to the deckhouse. Udall flung open the door.

"Well, here we are," he said loudly. "Ladies first."

He stood aside, allowing her to enter, then followed awfully, closing the door behind him.

Inside, the light was so dim that, after the brightness of the deck, Val could see nothing. Suddenly a match flared. Udall held it high above his head, while he reached to light the lamp. Val saw the figure of a man sprawled on the sofa, looking at her. It was the Frenchman.

She did not know why the sight of him gave her a quick, nauseating feeling of fear, unless it was the look on his face as he leered at her. He made no move to get up, nor did he speak in those first few seconds. The lamp-wick ignited. All at once the deck-house was filled with a soft, even light, as Udall turned up the wick. He grunted his satisfaction; threw his hat on the table. The girl did not move; that cold, inexplicable fear prevented her from seating herself. The Frenchman was the first to say anything.

"So you managed it," he said to Udall. A low chuckle escaped him. "Did I not tell you, mon vieux, that Soutar was the bait to put on that line?"

Insolently, his eyes travelled over Val's

figure. Striving to keep at bay the unreasonable panic invading her, she turned to Udall.

"What's the meaning of this, Udall?" Her voice was nearly steady, nearly. "You told me that French was on a job. What does he mean?"

When he replied, Udall's voice was cold, all traces of friendliness had disappeared from it.

"Never mind about that. Sit down! There's one or two things we're anxious to know about you, Miss Val-Blakely."

The pause before the "Blakely" was significantly prolonged, but the girl gave no sign that she had noticed it. Udall regarded her narrowly. He broke the tension, that had followed his last words, by leaning over the table and speaking again.

"Let's cut the cackle and get down to business. What's your game? Come on, I posture. She gave him back look for look. On the sofa, the Frenchman laughed coarsely.

"Show her the cable, Udall," he said. "Show her Gilbert's cable."

Still keeping his eyes on her, Udall felt in his pocket and drew out a Pacific Cable Board slip. Silently he handed it over to her. Only a very keen observer would have noted the slight trembling of her hands, as she held the telegram so that the light of the lamp would fall on it.

"Blakely goods not genuine," she read. "Do not proceed further with business. Advise dumping. Gilbert."

Her face was definitely paler, when she handed the slip back, but her voice was still firm.

"I don't know what it's all about," she said.

"No, you wouldn't," he said with heavy sarcasm. "But you'd better think quick. Then let's know what you've got to say."

Val made a gesture of utter bewilderment.

"But what does Gilbert mean?" she asked. "I suppose the cable is from him."

Udall was beginning to show signs of rising temper. Before he could say anything, the Frenchman had risen and moved across the narrow deck-house, until he stood over the seated girl. He tapped Udall lightly on the shoulder.

"Let me talk with her, Udall," he said. "Me, I know how to handle women."

Val's eyes were contemptuous.

"This cable, Gilbert simply informs us that you are not what you pretend to be. He advises us, in fact," his voice became almost caressing, "to get rid of you. Now why should Gilbert say that?"

She ignored him utterly, remaining seated, with head slightly bowed so that the lamplight picked out the rich gold of her hair, examining her nails. The Frenchman's voice lost something of its softness.

Without any warning, Udall's fist crashed down on to the table.

"Answer, damn you!" he growled savagely.

His violence did not fluster her.

"I refuse to answer anything said to me by that." Her contemptuous hand indicated the Frenchman, who grinned evilly. "And I can't tell you what you should know better than I do. If you can't understand Gilbert's cables, how should I?"

"By God!" Udall grated. "You'd better."

All at once he appeared to regain control of himself. It was strange how violence could erupt through the layer of strong calm which usually hid his emotions from the world; then, just as suddenly, he held under by his iron will. His fingers drummed lightly on the table, a sure sign that a new line of thought had presented itself and was being followed. The rapid tattoo stopped.

"Police pimp?"

The words were hurled straight at her, backed up by the piercing look of Udall's cold, grey eyes. The girl did not flinch.

"I've never had anything to do with the police," she answered. "They're no friends of mine, and you know it."

"Do I?" Udall muttered. "Oh, do I?"

At her right the Frenchman stirred. He placed his hands on the table, bending over towards her, so that his narrow, ratlike face appeared to hover within a few inches of her own.

"Questions!" he said. "I remember, I think, questions you asked once about a man called—tens, let me think," he pretended to rack his brain for the name—"ah, yes! Heatherley. No?"

Both men saw the start that the girl could not disguise. Her eyes were fixed on the table, so that they betrayed nothing, but all vestige of color had left her cheeks now. Udall, now that the Frenchman had indicated something that might lead to the information they wanted, took over the questioning again. He ran his hand meditatively over his square chin, the bristles sounding dry and harsh under his palm.

"Now we're getting on," he said. "Heatherley. Let me see. A policeman, if I remember right, a lousy bull on the special drug squad. Oh, a smart young cove, Heatherley; a detective-sergeant, eh? Youngest in the force. What a pity he chucked it and disappeared." He brooded for a space, then added, with a sneer, "somebody must have paid him well."

Val came to life. Her eyes blazed; a spot of hectic color burned on her cheekbones.

"You're lying! Dick would never have dreamed of..."

She bit off the rest, realising that she had fallen into the trap set for her. Udall was smiling broadly; the Frenchman's low chuckle showed her how badly she had slipped.

"So you did know him, did you?" Udall inquired. "That's fine!"

The girl flushed scarlet.

"My brother," she said in a low voice.

She had not meant to make the admission, but all at once the conviction had swept over her of the uselessness of trying to fend off the cunning efforts of these two men to get from her what they were seeking. A full admission now could not affect her in any way; she was in a situation from which she could see no prospect of escape. Better by far to tell everything, and so perhaps rid herself of them. She did not think for a moment that they would allow her to leave the Alcia; she knew far too much—Gilbert had warned them too late—but she did not care. Scutar's peril overshadowed her own; the realisation that Udall had no intention of helping him had been a worse shock to her than Gilbert's cable. All she wanted now was to be left in peace for a while, to be free of the Frenchman's suggestive leer and Udall's unexpressive mask. But they wanted to know more yet.

"You'd better spill the lot," Udall suggested.

Val did not lift her eyes. When she commenced to speak, her voice was dull, mechanical.

"Dick Heatherley is my brother."

The Frenchman gave a coarse laugh.

"Was," he said, laughing again.

Udall brought him to heel with a glance. Val gave no sign that she had heard.

"When he vanished three years ago," she went on, still in that lifeless voice, "I tried everywhere to find some explanation of his disappearance."

Like a flame that is fanned by a passing breeze, her voice rose proudly.

"I knew that he would not have left his duty unless something had happened to him. He was the only person I had to care for in the world. People who knew he was

on the Drug Squad were whispering horrible things. I had to do something to find out what had become of him. The police said they could find no trace of him. The only thing to do was to see what I could find out for myself."

"He'd been fighting against the drug traffic. I concluded that the people engaged in it were the ones most likely to know anything about him. I determined to mix with them, join in their activities if I could, and then see what information I could gather."

The flat, dead tones ceased momentarily, while her mind went back to that resolution taken so long ago. She went on:

"It was hard. The people...! It took me two years to get anywhere. I seemed to make so little progress. About three months ago Gilbert came to Melbourne. I don't know what he was there for; he only stayed two nights. The afternoon he was due to leave, I was sitting in a downstairs dance place in Swanston Street. Somebody pointed him out to me. They told me who he was and what he and his crowd were doing in Sydney. Dick had been in Sydney on something connected with opium when he disappeared. An idea came to me in a flash. I made up my mind to try it out."

"There was a woman called Val Blakely in Melbourne. She was in a pretty big way—drugs. I'd been friendly with her about eighteen months—my christian name was the same as hers. About a week before, she'd gone away on a trip without saying a word to anybody except myself. She said that if her agents knew she wasn't on the job herself they'd try all sorts of funny business. She only told me she was going because she wanted someone to look after one or two little things for her, send on mail, keep her people supplied, and so on. I suppose she thought I wasn't big enough or experienced enough to try and cut her out. At all events, that was the position."

"Well, I watched Gilbert until he left the dance place we were in. I followed him to the street and down to the hotel where he was staying. When he'd gone up in the lift, I got them to phone him and say I was waiting to see him. Val Blakely was the name I gave. The only risk I ran was that, perhaps, he might have met the other Val, but I didn't think that was likely. Gilbert wasn't in Melbourne much."

"There's not much more to tell you, Gilbert didn't know I wasn't what I claimed to be. He'd heard enough about Val Blakely, but he'd never seen her. You know the story I told him, Udall. Well, it sounded good to him. We went to Sydney in the same train that night."

Her voice ceased. In the stuffy quietness of the room the sound of a moth fluttering about the lamp, knocking itself against the glass chimney, was unnaturally loud. Then the Frenchman's shrill, sneering laugh came again.

"Mon Dieu! That is too good a joke! She looks and looks for Heatherley, who has been dead for..."

Udall could move with startling speed when the occasion demanded it. Before Val had realised fully that he had stirred, he had reached the Frenchman, seized him by the arm, and sent him reeling over to the sofa. Udall was mad with rage as he stood over the cowering Frenchman, fist raised as if to strike.

"Damn you! You loose-mouthed, blabbing fool," he said furiously. "God strike me dead! A man ought to finish you and shut your trap for keeps."

He swung round on Val, still seething as the result of the Frenchman's ill-timed remark.

"And you. You thought you were pretty smart, didn't you? You'd find out all about everything, you would. A real smart little jane, you are!"

He went to his chair and sat down. Val

looked at him swiftly as he sank into his seat. Except for a few beads of perspiration on his forehead, there were no signs of his flash of temper. After an interminable minute, he stood up briskly.

"Come on, French," he said. "Time to be going."

From the door he looked back over his shoulder at Val, who had not stirred.

"So you didn't expect us to row you ashore, brainy girl! You'll stay here for the time being. There's food in the lockers, if you're hungry. There's no need for us to do anything with you—yet." A mirthless, cruel smile curled his thin lips. "You won't be lonely long. French has work to do to-night and to-morrow, but he'll be able to keep you company after about eleven to-morrow night." He clapped the Frenchman on the shoulder. "No objections, French?"

The Frenchman's lips were parted. His tongue moistened them as he looked over at Val, taking in the beauty he had desired for so long.

Val collapsed in the chair, burying her face in her hands. But she could not shut out the memory of those heavy, wet lips, that mean face, and the glowing, lustful eyes that had devoured her, possessing her in advance.

CHAPTER 14

THE alleyway was quiet and deserted, running narrowly between the backs of the hovels. The noise of the traffic and of voices in other thoroughfares reached it faintly, as a distant hum, emphasizing the deep silence of that backwater. The glow of light above the roofs of the right-hand line of shacks, coming from All Nations Street, only served to enhance the inky pools of shadow which lay between the occasional strips of radiance cast down by the late-risen moon.

Into this atmosphere of deadly stillness, the uneven rasp of heavy boots came startlingly. There had been a slight movement in one of the blackest of the patches of shadow a second before these footfalls were heard. It might only have been the trembling of a rag in the breeze. It stopped now. Perhaps the wind had ceased to explore that corner. The stumbling tread came nearer. A voice was raised in maudlin song:

"She was the pur-est of the pew-er
Lovely Nan-cy, lovely Nan-cy Gray."

There was a clatter of roughly-shod feet, as if some scattered rubbish had been responsible for a stumble. On the heels of the string of oaths that followed this mishap, putting an end to the story of the pure and lovely Nancy Gray, the singer appeared around the turn of the alleyway. He stood for a moment in a V of silver moonlight between two houses. A sailor by his dress, ashore for the night, and tempting Providence by filling up with bad liquor in some low grog shop and then wandering alone in the most unsavory section of the native quarter. He hesitated for a moment, as if uncertain whether to go on or retrace his steps. He swayed slightly, his eyes a trifle screwed up against the soft moonlight. Then, muttering to himself, he advanced again, shambling along in the middle of the alley.

When he came opposite the patch of shadow, in which something had appeared to move just before his advent, he paused once more, gazing around with the stupid air of the very drunk to find out, perhaps, where he was. And now the blackness gave another sign of life. A whisper, so faint that again it may have been the wind, came from its depths: "O.K." Whether it was a voice or the wind, the reveller gave no sign of having heard. Instead, he embarked on another musical item, more robust this time:

"There was a ship, a ship of fame,
Rise and shine, my bully boys."

The bellowing of his song seemed to give him heart. He recommenced his journey, tacking from side to side. Soon nothing could be heard of him but the last faint echoes of his ditty. Then they, too, faded, the alleyway sinking back into the sinister, brooding silence that was normal to it at night. Half an hour passed without any change.

The full moon was much higher and had chased the shadows from the middle of the alley. With a suddenness that was startling a window in the back of one of the hovels was illuminated, but the rectangle of yellow light was as suddenly eclipsed by a hand and forearm, which appeared and drew down a tattered blind. This manifestation was closely followed by another. Over in the darkness of a house on the opposite side of the lane, something stirred. At first it would have been difficult to say what it was. But when the shape, after hesitating momentarily on the brink of the shadow, slipped swiftly across the pale strip of moonlight, it betrayed itself as a man. He was running, crouched up, as if to minimize the chances of detection, and making for the rickety fence near the lighted window.

With the agility of a cat the man who had appeared so mysteriously climbed noiselessly and rapidly over the fence. Seemingly able to pick his way faultlessly in the dark, he stole up to the house until he was stooping beneath the window. He rested there for a moment, his arm pressed hard against his left side, stilling the thumping of his heart. With all his senses alert to catch the least indication that unseen watchers had observed his quick appearance from the shadows, he crouched there, hardly breathing. No hint of movement becoming apparent, he rose cautiously to peer through the torn blind into the room in which the lamp was burning.

Although the scene at which he found himself looking seemed ordinary and uninteresting enough, the man outside gave an almost imperceptible sound of satisfaction. He was looking into a room devoid of all furniture except a rickety table and four kitchen chairs. Three men were seated there, heads close together over the table, on which a few papers were scattered. Of the two men who were listening while the third spoke, one was heavy-featured and square-jawed, with light grey, hard eyes gazing expressionlessly from a face that was like a mask; while the other was a furtive, mean-looking fellow with sleek, oiled, black hair swept back from a narrow brow and eyes set too close together. The third man faced the window fully; a man of big build, florid, over-dressed, and chewing an unlighted cigar.

It was impossible for the eavesdropper to hear through the closed window what the big man was saying. But, as he watched, he saw the hard-eyed man make a gesture of dissent and commence to talk in his turn. The third member of the party sat silent, darting glances from his cunning, little eyes from one to the other of the talkers.

Standing there, close against the wall, the watcher took it all in, finding every gesture, every reference to the papers on the table, of interest. Once he appeared to hear something for, as if he had been shot, he dropped to the ground, clutching at something in his pocket. Finally, reassured by the absence of any further sign, he rose and resumed his still observing of the room and its occupants.

Some little time passed before he moved again, and then it was to stoop and look at the luminous dial of his wrist-watch. Apparently something annoyed him in connection with the time; he gave a low exclamation before resuming his watching at the window. Inside, an argument had developed; all three men were talking

loudly now; stray words could be distinguished, but not sufficiently to give any key to the conversation generally. The florid man silenced the other two abruptly by something he said, and then, producing a pencil from his pocket, commenced to figure rapidly on the back of one of the sheets of paper before him. The others watched sceptically.

Impatiently the man who, unknown to them, was following every movement glanced at his watch for the third time. Even as he did so he heard, coming from the street on to which the front of the house faced, the noise of voices raised in familiar song:

"There was a ship, a ship of fame,
Rise and shine, my bullies."

It rang out with drunken heartiness, followed by the sounds of loud-voiced dissension; apparently the reveller who some time earlier had gone his staggering way down the alley had been joined by ship-mates. The man standing motionless under the window smiled grimly to himself; the three in the room, he noticed through the split in the blind, either did not hear what was going on in the street, or, hearing, paid no attention. They continued to be absorbed in their own affairs. The voices of the sailors—only about twenty yards away, around the side of the shack—were rising hoarsely.

"I tell you she lives here."

Apparently some milder individual attempted to argue in softer tones, for the voices sank until another foghorn bellow shouted down all opposition.

"Don't talk to me, Gordtruth! Ain't I been 'ere every time I been in Suva the last three years? This is Palu's joint, or may I never see another woman again."

A different voice said:

"Ah, Palu! She's a dandy little Jane, she is. Strike me blind! 'Ot as mustard. She's an Ellise Islander, ain't she, Jack?"

It seemed that this confirmation of the existence of the girl, Palu, brought in its wake conviction as to the reliability of Jack's claim to know her residence. The voices died down, to be followed after an interval of about a minute by a thunderous banging somewhere in front of the house. The merchant marine had come to make a call.

Smiling sardonically, the man lurking at the rear of the house watched the effect on the three in the lamplit room of the loud knocking at the front door. He saw the man with the square jaw get up from his chair, take a swift look at the automatic he took from his hip and placed in the more accessible coat pocket, and then move from the room. The other two remained, eyes on the door, through which their companion had disappeared.

From the front came the sound of voices again; the visitors, it appeared, were not inclined to accept a plain statement to the effect that Palu either had never lived in the place, or had moved. The sound of argument rose suddenly once more; the visitors were getting nasty. The two men left in the room must have thought so, too. The clamor was at its height when the florid man turned to his friend and said something. The other nodded and rose, slipping a knife out of its sheath at the back of his belt, as he did so. They hurried out of the room. At the door the big man hesitated for a moment, looking back dubiously at the papers. Then as the voices outside took on a new and ugly note he turned and went out.

"Good boy!" the man under the window said softly. "Good luck. Should be on the stage."

Even as he said the words to himself he was moving swiftly. His hands were up at the window, manipulating a thin blade against the latch. There was a click, and the next moment the window was up, the watcher straddling the sill, pausing for just a fraction of time to satisfy himself

that the three were still occupied at the front door before sliding noiselessly to the floor.

"Handy to have a crook's training," he murmured to himself.

In spite of the coolness of his actions he wasted no time. A step took him to the table. In a flash the papers littered on it were swept together and pocketed. Another stride, and he was framed in the window for a moment against the darkness of the night, then a soft thud announced his return to the yard. The window closed softly; the blind swung back into position.

From the sound of things, Palu's friends were being forced slowly and reluctantly back into the street, but their activities no longer greatly interested the man who was now dropping over the fence into the alleyway. They had done their work; done it well. The longer they could keep the other three engaged, the better, of course, but, feeling the papers he had seized rustling in his breast pocket, the man who had taken them did not fear being caught now. In fact, as if he no longer cared whether he were seen or not, he took the middle of the lane, where the silver flood of moonlight made the going easier, and headed for All Nations Street at a rapid pace.

He had, perhaps, gone half the distance towards the lights and the crowds of this thoroughfare, throwing an occasional glance back to assure himself that he was not being followed, when, about ten paces ahead of him, and to the right, he thought he saw something move furtively in a black cavern of shadow. He stopped abruptly, his hand flying to his arm-pit. Before he could draw his gun a voice came softly from the gloom.

"I would not advise you to try that. Go on, put them up. Above your head."

Obediently the subject of this command raised his arms slowly above his head. There was nothing else to do. Apart from the fact that the unseen speaker obviously was ready to shoot, while his gun was still in its holster, there was the additional advantage of being outlined plainly in the radiance of the moon, while the other lurked unseen in the darkness.

A figure came sauntering out of the gloom, automatic ostentatiously displayed. The newcomer wore dark clothes, but the suet of his feet indicated that he had on grass sandals. The man who had been held up started slightly. The other came closer.

"Turn round," he commanded, motioning with his gun that the victim of the hold-up should turn so that the moon would shine on his face, while that of the man in grass sandals would be kept in shadow. There was nothing to do but turn. When the manoeuvre was executed, and the moon revealed fully the features on which it shone, it was the turn of the man in grass sandals to start.

"Soutar!" he ejaculated in tones of amazement.

"Himself," the other replied dryly. "And I miss my guess if I'm not meeting my old friend Fu again."

CHAPTER 15.

"SOUTAR!" Mister Fu said again, as if disbelieving his eyes. He went on with deadly suavity. "The gods are very good to me. I had given up all hope of ever paying my debt to you. But now..." He smiled evilly, the moon just lighting up a small section of his cheek and thin-lipped mouth. "So you've added jail-breaking to your criminal record, have you?"

Soutar gave no sign of perturbation.

"So it seems," he said.

"Well," the Chinaman observed, "I must congratulate you, although, as your picturesque vernacular has it, you have stepped out of the frying-pan into the fire."

"Is that so?" the Kid said evenly.

"Yes. And keep your hands up."

"Blast it!" the Kid protested. "I can't stand like this all night. If you want to talk, for God's sake take my gun and let me put my arms down. I haven't been trained for this stunt."

"You're a cool customer," Mister Fu complimented him. "All right, I'll take your gun. There are one or two things I want you to know before I finish with you." His chuckle was sinister; he moved close up, jamming his revolver into Soutar's stomach. "Don't try any tricks or I'll blow your guts out through your spine."

Soutar allowed himself to be disarmed, then lowered his arms with a sigh of relief. The Chinaman slipped the gun he had taken into his pocket, taking care, however, to keep his own directed at the man he intended to kill.

"Before we go any further," he said, "you can hand over the papers you just took."

The Kid looked at him uncomprehendingly.

"Papers?"

There was a snarl in Mister Fu's usually soft voice when he replied.

"Yes, papers! Don't play the fool. I was there to get them myself, only you saved me the trouble. You're smart all right, Soutar. I didn't know you were hiding on the other side of the street. I was on the point of moving myself when I saw you cross and climb the fence. It was only a matter of waiting then." He laughed to himself. "I wondered who it was. So you've turned dog on Udall, have you? Branching out on your own, eh? Soutar, you wouldn't have stood a chance; if I hadn't got you Udall would have. But you certainly saved me a bit of trouble. Now hand them over."

Reluctantly, the Kid's hand went to his breast pocket, reappearing with the sheaf of papers he had seized. Without relaxing his vigilance in any way, Fu took them from him, stuffing them into an inner pocket of his coat. His chuckle of triumph broke the silence.

"You must agree that it is a good joke, your going to so much trouble to get those papers for me. A splendid joke."

He laughed again, and then Soutar, his eyes now attuned to the shadow in which the other kept his face, saw the mirth disappear from it, to be replaced by a look of vindictive hate.

"And now," the gentle Mister Fu said, "we come to a more personal matter. You remember, Soutar, that I promised you not so long ago that the time would come when I would repay you very fully for the tricks you have played on me. I think that time has come now. So that you may have time to think about it I am telling you that I am going to kill you in a very few minutes. No! his voice had an evil, mocking rasp. "Don't move unless you want to hasten that happy event. I intend to prolong my pleasure by telling you something before you die."

He paused. Soutar saw his lip curl again in sardonic merriment. The alleyway was quiet, the shadows of the two men were grotesquely stumpy on the moon-washed ground. Soutar strained his ears for any noise that would indicate the approach of anybody at all; Udall and French would be sure to give chase, he thought, when the theft of the papers was discovered. Fu, if he intended to kill, must surely be mad to delay like this. But the Chinaman, apparently, felt sure enough of his vengeance. He commenced to speak again.

"Yes, Soutar, there'll be no trouble about shooting you to-night. I have a silencer on my automatic. But," the cruelty in his tones was knife-edged, "I intend that you shall die after suffering what may be for you a worse agony." Abruptly his voice took on its ordinary friendly note again as he asked: "Of course, you haven't seen your

—er—friend, Miss Blakely, since your misfortune, have you?"

A cold fear contracted Soutar's heart. Val! What did this grinning devil know of her? Surely the girl had followed his instructions and kept within the grounds of the Grand Pacific. A more definite horror occurred to him: Could she have fallen into Fu's hands? Conquering the panic that threatened to unman him, he controlled his voice.

"Miss Blakely?" he said. "No, why should I?"

Fu's dry laugh preceded his answer.

"I thought you were—er—interested in the young lady. In that event you might have liked to know that she is no longer staying at her hotel."

The Kid gave up all pretence. He took a step forward, only to be forced to halt by the upthrust, threatening muzzle of the Chinaman's revolver.

"For God's sake, Fu," he implored harshly, "where is she?"

"Ah! so you are interested, I see. Now you would like to know where the lady may be. There is no reason why you should not know; it will be an agreeable thought for you to die with. Miss Blakely is..."

He stopped deliberately, watching with sadistic pleasure the Kid's agonised face, pale and contorted in the brightness of the tropic moon. Then he said slowly:

"Miss Blakely is with friends."

For an instant his victim's face relaxed as if a horrible dread had been dissipated, but only for an instant. Mister Fu's next words destroyed any illusions that Soutar may have had.

"Your friends," Fu said. "Safe and sound on board the Alicia."

The exclamation that the Kid could not suppress was honey to his tormentor. He continued:

"Yes. She went aboard yesterday."

"You're lying!" Soutar said desperately. "You're lying to torture me before you shoot. I know you, Fu. How would you know, at any rate?"

Fu sneered.

"Do you think I don't know every move Udall makes? Pulstrom is not the only man I pay in the great Udall's gang. I have someone on his schooner. There is no harm in telling you this now. Just as I have people who have followed every step Udall has made since he landed. But to get back to Miss Blakely. Yes, she is there, safe and sound. That is," he added meaningfully, "for the moment."

If he had expected to extract another indication of agony from Soutar he was mistaken. The Kid gave no sign that he had heard. His thoughts were racing. What he had feared must have happened: Udall must have discovered Val's imposture. And now they had her on the schooner. God in heaven! Why had she allowed herself to be tricked? Standing there, white-faced in the moonlight, Fu covering him with his gun, he racked his brains desperately for some way of escape. He must get out of this mess! It was impossible to think that he should be shot down here in cold blood while Val was needing him; Udall would be merciless. He groaned inwardly at the recollection of the way he had walked into the Chinaman's trap. The latter was talking once more.

"This Frenchman," he was saying, "A talker apparently. My man on the schooner was drinking with him to-day. Your French friend was very happy. Do you know why?"

"No!" Soutar said, hoping that he gave no sign of the horror that came over him at the mention of the Frenchman.

"Because," Mister Fu said slyly, "to-night he is to be Miss Blakely's special guard. Fortunate man!"

Fu's insistent, repeated laugh rang softly and seemed to snap something in Soutar's

brain. The Frenchman—and Vall. No, by God! Never that! He answered calmly, fighting for time.

"You're lying, Fu. But you can't bluff me."

"I am not lying, Soutar," the Chinaman said evilly. "And you know it. You'll die knowing it, and picturing your Miss Blakely in the Frenchman's arms. A pretty thought, very pretty. To-night, while you're lying here in the gutter, it'll be happening."

"You scum!" the Kid grated. "You low, lying scum." His voice rose suddenly. "Shoot, Udall, it's Fu!" he yelled.

The old trick worked. Involuntarily, Fu whirled, his gun advanced to deal with the attack he thought was coming from behind him. In the second that he was off his guard, the Kid leapt. Like a hurled spear he was on the Chinaman, one hand groping for the revolver, the other arm constricting his enemy's throat. Backwards and forwards they swayed, clasped together so that they seemed like one writhing and contorted body, now in the shadow cast by the mean houses, now tearing at each other in the pale milkiness of the moonlight. Fu was like an eel. Wildly he twisted and struggled, striving to free himself, but Soutar clung doggedly, gradually tightening the arm that encircled the other's neck. At times the fused single body would thrust out a limb, Fu's arm with the revolver still held desperately, and the Kid's hand creeping up over the wrist to try and secure it, and then that arm would disappear again, drawn into the whirlpool of straining flesh and muscles.

Fu was uttering low, bestial sounds as he fought. His teeth sank into Soutar's neck, just missing the jugular. Soutar grunted savagely, and, seizing his opportunity, drove his knee into the pit of the Chinaman's stomach. With a strangled cry, the Chinaman doubled up, and as he did so the Kid relinquished his throat hold and grabbed with both hands at the revolver. Fu was vomiting, but struggled feebly to retain the gun. Before Soutar could wrest it from him, it exploded with a muffled report and Fu collapsed onto the ground.

For a moment the Kid stood looking down at him stupidly, not knowing whose finger it was that had pressed the trigger. Then realization of his situation came to him. At any minute Udall or the Frenchman might turn up in pursuit of the man who had got away with their papers. His breath coming in hoarse, rattling gasps, he knelt by Mister Fu and retrieved the papers from the unconscious Chinaman's pocket. Fu was not dead, but Soutar did not stop to ascertain where he had been shot, or how seriously. Taking his own gun he replaced it in its holster, stowed away the papers that had so nearly been lost, and with a final backward glance that satisfied him that nobody was as yet in sight set off at a run.

Mister Fu continued to lie where he had fallen, a dark stream trickling from under his hunched-up body, spreading like an ugly blot in the moonlight. His revolver, with its silencer, lay by him. There was silence in the alleyway for five minutes, and then came the sound of hurrying feet, and then the Frenchman appeared, going as swiftly as the necessity of examining the shadowed sides of the lane would permit. At the sight of the figure lying there still, they stopped, then advanced cautiously. Udall bent, turning the unconscious man over on his back. Looking down at that face, plainly illumined by the moon, Udall swore.

"Fu, by God! I knew he was in on it. Hell! It would only come this way first, instead of chasing down in the other direction!"

Expertly, he went through the Chinaman's pockets, cursing when he did not find what he was seeking.

"He's been ratted. God! What a mess! Somebody we don't know's got those cursed papers now."

He commenced to rave blasphemously, no longer the cool, impassive Udall who controlled events so calmly.

"Somebody'll pay for this. Why the hell did Simlow want to put anything on paper? Why?"

He ranted on. The Frenchmen had been standing silently, his eyes glinting as he turned his head in such a way as to catch the moon's reflection. Now he spoke.

"Let us go further. You never know what we may find. In the meantime, this Mister Fu of yours must do no more harm."

While Udall looked on, he picked up the Chinaman's muffled automatic, placed it to the wounded man's ear, and blew out his brains.

CHAPTER 16

ON board the *Alicia*, Val had gone through twenty-four hours of torment. It was now, she guessed by the position of the sun seen through the small portholes of the deckhouse, about six o'clock on the day following that on which she had been lured on board by Udall. Acons seemed to have crept by since the moment she had set her foot on the schooner's deck with such a pleasant thrill at seeing so many familiar objects, acons in which to think agonisingly of Jimmy, and when her mind, tired by its long agony, rejected that torturing subject, of the Frenchman, who, Udall had said, would come back to her at eleven o'clock that night. Not for a moment did she doubt Udall's intentions. What he had threatened he would do, and, after the Frenchman had enjoyed his reward, they would probably find some quiet and unobtrusive way of disposing of her.

Her own horrible position, though, occupied her very little. Jimmy had been taken away from her, either to spend long years in a place from which he would emerge an old and broken man, or, she shuddered, to be hanged. This made her numb to all other sufferings, although, on those occasions when a picture of the Frenchman's face, of those pouting, moist, over-ripe lips and yellow teeth invaded her consciousness, she felt sick, a physical nausea left her with the cold perspiration beading her brow.

She had not slept. That had been a mercy that had been denied to her. Through the night, and in the stillness of early morning, she had heard the silver chiming of ships' bells marking the passage of time. She looked forward eagerly to their clear ringing, but during the day, when launches and native boats moved noisily about the harbor, she had not heard them so regularly. Now, with the quiet of evening stealing over the water, she heard them striking again above the harsh clamor of a flock of gulls quarrelling over some fragment of refuse somewhere near the schooner.

When she first heard small boats moving about, after the working day had commenced, she had thought of crying aloud for help in the hope that some adjacent lighter or native outrigger would hear, and either come to her assistance or report the matter. A moment's reflection showed her the futility of such action. Udall was not the man to run such a risk of having the police investigating his ship. At the first sign of any call from her, some member of the crew would be on the spot with authority to take steps to silence her. She preferred to be left alone.

It was stiflingly hot in the deckhouse. Door and port-holes were secured from the outside. The only air that entered passed through ventilators high up on the wall. The lamp swung slightly, almost imperceptibly, and the laborious ticking of a cheap

alarm clock, hanging by a hook from the wall, was loud in the silence. Val paid no attention to the position of its hands—it had been hours slow ever since the *Alicia* left Sydney. During the first weeks of the voyage, until they reached the island in fact, it had always amused her to note that, while somebody, Udall or the Frenchman, painstakingly wound the clock every day, nobody had considered it worth while to set it at the correct time or regulate it.

The sun was much lower now, on the point of plunging into the ocean. For the first time that day the girl remembered that she had eaten nothing since, by an effort of will, she had forced herself to swallow a few morsels of food at lunch, over thirty hours before, at the Grand Pacific. She did not feel hungry, but she was aware now of a growing weakness. At first, under the influence of despair, she dismissed the idea of food altogether. Then, as she remembered that the Frenchman would come in a very few hours, she changed her mind, and, going to the lockers, looked to see what food was there. She knew that she would never give in to French without a struggle, and, for her own sake and Jimmy's, she wanted to have all the strength she could muster.

A tin of tongue and another containing ship's biscuits rewarded her search. She ate as much as she could, washing it down with tepid water from a carafe she found in the cupboard. The food certainly gave her more heart, and when she had cleared the tins from the table she stood near one of the portholes, drawing nervously at a cigarette and looking out at the darkening harbor and at the western sky, where the changing tones of sunset were already giving way to the deep blue and mauve of advancing night.

When it was quite dark she lit the lamp, following an obscure instinct that made her recoil from the thought of being trapped there in the darkness by the Frenchman when he came. It made no difference, of course, but somehow she felt that she would fear the man less, while she could see him. The lamp burned unevenly, causing unshapely, quivering shadows to leap and flicker over walls and ceiling. The wick was smoking badly, the soot was blackening the lower part of the globe and writhing upwards as smoke to join the dark patch on the whiteness of the ceiling right above the lamp.

All sorts of ships' noises came to her now, sitting there in solitude. Her nerves were getting ragged; the scurry of a rat outside on the deck set the blood hammering in her temples and caused her muscles to tighten unconsciously. Something, it must have been a very heavy piece of driftwood, or, perhaps, some native craft badly handled, knocked against the schooner's side. She heard it and thought that the boat with Udall and the Frenchman had come alongside. For minutes after that she sat tense, her breath coming unevenly between her parted lips, waiting for the sound of footsteps on the deck, and for the door to be flung open to admit the face she was now dreading more to see with every passing second. When nothing further happened, she relaxed again, desperately trying to set her thoughts on Jimmy, wondering what he was doing, whether he was well, and if he was thinking of her at all. At last, just as the time was approaching when, it would have appeared sleep should have been impossible, nature took a hand, the exhausted mind and body refused to carry on further without rest, and, her head pillowed in the crook of her arm, she fell into heavy slumber. The alarm-clock continued to tick on remorselessly; a rat appeared on the floor, came in through some secret entrance of his own, and commenced to draw away a fragment of biscuit that had dropped unnoticed from the table; somewhere on the harbor a siren sounded dimly, but none of these things disturbed her.

It was the slamming-to of the deckhouse

door that awakened her. At first, as she started up from the table, she found it difficult to place herself. Then, in the smoky light cast by the lamp, she saw the Frenchman standing with his back to the door, watching out of small, bloodshot eyes. His hair, usually so sleek, was ruffled; there was an ugly twist to his full-lipped mouth. At first she thought he had been drinking. She sat erect, staring at him for a moment, until he took a step towards her. Then a rush of panic sweeping over her, she rose, the chair crashing over behind her, and moved so as to keep the table between the Frenchman and herself.

He stopped short at that, and grinned evilly.

"Why are you frightened? I don't want to hurt you. I am tired; I must have food. Then, perhaps," his tongue appeared, moistening the red lips, "we shall talk together. No?"

Val did not take her eyes off him as he took food from the locker and placed it on the table with a bottle of cheap wine he produced from his pocket. She still kept the table between them, watching, fascinated, as he crammed food into himself, conveying pieces of tongue to his mouth on the blade of his knife, and taking large bites of biscuit. He ate as if it was his first meal for the day. At last, satisfied, he leant back and reached for the wine.

"You will share a glass of wine with me?" he asked, looking across the table.

"No," Val said.

The Frenchman shrugged, and poured himself a generous drink. The raw stuff seemed to mellow him, for, leaning back, drawing a cigarette, he was inclined to talk. Val stood and listened, grateful for anything that would delay the inevitable crisis.

"I am indeed fortunate to see you tonight," the Frenchman said in a manner that indicated that, in his opinion, the good fortune was shared by the girl as well. She gave no sign to indicate whether she shared this opinion or not.

"Things are not going too well," he continued, his tongue loosened by the wine. "Very important papers have been stolen from us this night."

Eager to do anything that would prolong the conversation, Val said:

"Oh?"

The Frenchman appeared to be gratified at this sign of interest.

"Yes," he said. "Very important. Udall is still ashore. I am to rejoin him later. It was my, what do you say? good luck that I had to come off to the ship for something that Udall wanted. But I must return later. That is not so good."

Val nodded mechanically. Oh, God! was this a reprieve? Could she hope for a further few hours before this man's hands would be reaching out for her? The Frenchman's next words shattered this illusion.

"But I think we have time to become a little better acquainted, you and I. You have not been very friendly to me, Val. You Australians are cold. But wait until you know something of my love..."

His eyes were leering over at her, the tongue again playing about those repulsive lips. All at once he threw down his cigarette, and, rising, stamped on it.

"You are being very silly, I think. I wish to be your friend. You will need such a one very soon." He paused significantly. "Udall, he is a very violent man, and things are going badly. To-morrow he will come aboard, and in a very evil temper. Me, I know. You have deceived him, and have learnt much that you should not know. Now, if I could say to Udall 'Val, she is my very dear friend. I myself will answer for her,' he might indeed be merciful. If not..."

He made an eloquent gesture, watching

her out of half-closed eyes. Val did not stir, simply watched him, ready to move when he did. He must have seen that his argument had had no effect on her, for, without any warning, he lunged across the table at her, grabbing at her wrist.

Val sprang back just in time, and he lay for a second sprawled over the table cursing foully. Then he was on his feet again, pursuing her madly.

"Udall!" she screamed. "Udall!"

Then a hand muffled her shrieks, but not before she heard the thud of hurrying feet outside. The world went black for her for a moment, and when she opened her eyes she saw a man's tall figure outlined fleetingly in the doorway before he stepped inside, drawing the door after him.

A ray of light from an electric torch flashed out, wavered for a moment, then settled on the two of them; Val, half fainting against the table, and the Frenchman, still clutching at her, one hand still over her mouth, looking over his shoulder in amazement. There was silence for a few seconds, broken only by the Frenchman's heavy breathing and the girl's stifled moans. Then a voice came from behind the torch.

"Get away from that girl, or I'll drop you, you gutter scum. Move, damn you, move!"

As if he had heard a ghost speaking, the Frenchman released Val and drew away slowly, staring unbelievably into the darkness beyond the light. Val did not move. "I'm mad," she was saying hysterically to herself. "It couldn't be him!" Then all doubts were dissolved. The voice came again.

"You're all right, Val. You're all right now, kid."

Something inside the girl seemed to snap. "Oh! Jimmy, Jimmy," she sobbed. "Thank God!"

Then she fainted properly.

Even as he moved forward to the fallen girl, Soutar did not take the light off the Frenchman or cease to keep him covered. When he stood over Val, he spoke once more.

"Light that lamp, and, by God, French, it won't need more than the blink of an eyelid from you and I'll splash your brains all over the wall."

His tones were hard and cold. The Frenchman reached for the lamp.

CHAPTER 17

WHEN the dull light of the lamp flickered up again, the Kid snapped off his torch and pocketed it. He stepped over to the Frenchman, ran his hand around his belt and into his hip-pocket, and tossed the knife and revolver he discovered out onto the deck. The Frenchman scowled. Even yet he did not seem able to believe that this actually was Soutar who had appeared so dramatically.

With the other man disarmed, Soutar bent over Val. A finger on her pulse satisfied him that she was merely suffering from a faint brought on by his sudden appearance following on the strain and horror that had preceded it. He turned to the Frenchman.

"Help me to get her onto the sofa," he said in a deadly even voice, and together they lifted the unconscious girl from the deck. Then Soutar slipped his gun into his pocket and stepped up close to the Frenchman, looking at him with eyes which had suddenly become relentless and forbidding.

"And now," he said. "I'm going to give you the hiding of your life, you dirty Marselles mongrel. Put your fists up."

The Frenchman backed away, fear glinting in his small eyes. Soutar followed remorselessly. His fist shot out and the

Frenchman's head jerked back, banging against the wall. The Kid did not leave him until he lay, a sobbing, bruised and bleeding pulp, over the table.

"That's just to go on with," Soutar said then, still in tones of icy hatred. "You've got more coming to you, but somebody else will look after that."

"And somebody else'll look after you," another voice said from the doorway.

Soutar did not betray any sign of surprise. He did not even turn round until he had taken a cigarette from his pocket and lighted it from a wax vesta snapped into flame on his thumb-nail. When he did turn to the door, smoke trickling from his nostrils, it was done casually.

"Ah, Udall," he said. "I was expecting you. There's no need for you to flash that gun around like that. It might go off and hurt someone."

He perched himself on the table, drawing again at his cigarette. Udall came right into the deckhouse, still keeping his automatic trained on the Kid. He looked as if he had spent a hectic evening. His boots were thick with dust, his tie awry, and there was something about the set of his jaw that boded ill for somebody. Strangely enough, he did not appear at all surprised to see Soutar. When he was a foot or so off the table he motioned with his gun.

"Sit down, you. I've got something to say to you." Then to the Frenchman, "French! D'you hear me? French!"

Soutar sat down, watching with a grim smile. The Frenchman rose slowly from his sprawling posture on the table, exposing a face that was a bloody, puffed-up mess. Udall gave no hint of emotion at this sight either.

"You sit down, too," he said to the Frenchman. "Here. These are yours, aren't they?" He tossed over a knife and revolver, adding, as the Frenchman gathered them clumsily, "Lucky thing for you I remembered something on board that I wanted to burn before anything happened. Next time you might have the sense to do as I tell you. Didn't I say to come to the schooner, pick up what I wanted, and come straight back? But no! You must get to fooling around with that Jane, instead. Well, you've got yours."

The Frenchman did not reply, merely sat there, fingering his knife and shooting glances charged with murderous hate at the Kid. Udall drew a paper from his pocket and tossed it over to the Kid.

"Read that," he said in his harsh, emotionless voice.

Soutar picked it up without a word. It was that day's copy of the "Fiji Times." A small cable item was ringed in pencil. He read it slowly.

"Sydney, Tuesday.

"Detective-Sergeant Spooner and Detectives Smithfield and Kent to-day arrested a man in connection with the Kingfield Highway murder. Later Aloysius John Harefields, laborer, was formally charged with the murder of Arthur Kennedy, picture-theatre proprietor. Harefield, who is known under various aliases, has a long criminal record..."

Then followed a resume of the Kingfield Highway affair.

The Kid read it all carefully, folding the paper when he had finished and putting it on the table. He looked over at Udall, who had not taken his eyes off him.

"Well, what about it?" he asked. "I read it earlier in the day."

"Listen, Kid," Udall replied. "It's no good trying to put any more bluff across. You did it once, and got away with it. It won't work again though, by God!"

On the sofa, Val stirred. Soutar rose

from his chair and hurried to her, bending over her as her eyes opened. She stared at him uncomprehendingly for a second, and then, with the recognition of who it was looking down at her, the color flooded her cheeks.

"It is you, Jimmy. Oh, it seemed too astonishing to be true. Oh, Jimmy..."

She clung to him, as if to convince herself that he was flesh and blood and not a dream figure. Soutar patted her gently.

"Yes, it's me, Val. You're all right now. Don't worry about anything. Anything, you understand?" His voice was steady and compelling. He did not attempt to hide what he was saying from Udall and the Frenchman. "No matter what happens now, you'll be O.K."

Somewhere at his back, the Frenchman muttered a shaky, scornful laugh. The girl's body stiffened in Soutar's arms, only to relax as she looked up at him and regained confidence from the serenity of his expression. He forced her back gently to the sofa as Udall spoke again.

"Yes, you'll be all right," Udall said harshly. "Both of you. All right where you won't do any more nosing around."

The Kid was unmoved by this outburst. He walked back and perched again on the table, swinging one leg and watching a band of smoke he had expelled as it mushroomed out.

"Don't be silly, Udall," he said coolly. "Why talk like that?"

Udall eyed him malevolently.

"How long have you been out?" he asked abruptly.

The Kid did not hesitate.

"You mean, how long is it since the police let me go? Oh, some time. Yesterday afternoon, in fact, I was out and about."

Val, listening, thought he must be mad. Surely he must realise that Udall would suspect something immediately. It seemed strange even to her that he had been free for two days without getting into touch with Udall. That he had not done so was in itself had enough; to admit to it calmly was simply asking for trouble. Udall took out a cigarette and lit it.

"Oh, so you were, were you? Why didn't you let us know? What've you been doing between then and now? Come on, damn you, answer! How did you know Val was here?"

The questions came with staccato swiftness; Udall was trying to fluster Soutar by the very rapidity with which he fired them. The Kid smiled, continuing to swing his legs, only stopping to tread on the cigarette end he dropped on the deck. Definitely, there was something queer about his attitude; he was too self-assured, too unworried for one confronted with what on the surface was a dangerous situation. Udall dropped his voice a bit, and continued:

"There's a lot I want to know about you, Soutar. We lost some pretty valuable papers to-night..."

"I know," Soutar said clearly. "I'm afraid you won't get 'em back, either." He shook his head. "There's one or two things there, names, information, and so on, you shouldn't have let get away from you, Udall."

It seemed impossible that such a simple statement should produce such an effect. The Frenchman was gazing incredulously, his eyes nearly hidden in his bruised and puffy face; Udall sat as if turned to stone, his sharp grey eyes unbelieving; Val had raised herself on one elbow, and was looking at Soutar as if she could not believe her ears. Udall was the first to recover.

"So," he said, in soft, deadly tones. "You knew all about it, did you? We won't inquire how, not just yet. But maybe you know who took them."

His eyes were boring into Soutar's. Soutar did not stir a muscle.

"Yes," he said. "I did."

Val's exclamation of fear came at the

same time as the Frenchman's grunt of utter, hopeless bewilderment. Udall alone did not appear to be surprised at this second revelation. He bent forward, tapping the muzzle of his revolver against his left palm.

"So you did, hey?" he said menacingly. "I'm just beginning to see things now. I suppose you think you'll bluff me into buying 'em back from you. That's your game, is it? You want to blackmail me, ME!"

His voice was scornful. The Kid looked at him silently a moment and then spoke.

"No, Udall," he replied, in low, clear tones. "Not blackmail you. I'm going to gaoi you."

A shell bursting in the small deckhouse could not have created a greater sensation. Shaken out of his iron composure, Udall gasped. The Frenchman sat with fallen jaw and then began to laugh brokenly. Val assured herself that it was all a dream. It must be a dream. Soutar took another cigarette from his pocket and lit it.

"Listen, Udall," he said, in a voice Val had never heard him use before. "The game's up. The police have your papers. You're finished."

The Frenchman was silent again now. Udall's face was like granite, but Soutar could see the dangerous expression in his half-closed eyes. Udall spoke, still tapping the automatic against his palm.

"And you've come all this way to tell us, have you? To let us know you've turned pump again. Well, by God! that's nice of you. So the police were never after you at all. That was a sick story of yours, Kid, very sick. But you'll never tell any more. You can't put that kind of thing over me, and get away with it. That girl, too; she'd better say her prayers."

He indicated Val.

"Don't be silly, Udall," Soutar said coldly. "It's too late for that sort of talk, that is," he added casually, "unless you want to swing instead of getting a few nice, easy years in jug. You don't think I'm fool enough to come aboard by myself, do you? I thought you had more imagination. But let's stop fooling." His voice lost its easy, casual tone, taking on a hard, official ring. "Udall, I have a warrant here for your arrest on a charge of..."

Udall's gun roared, filling the deckhouse with acrid fumes. The Kid, watching Udall closely, had seen his finger tightening on the trigger, and flung himself sideways over the table, his upraised arm smashing against the lamp, putting it out. Val screamed. Crouching on the other side of the table, the Kid saw a figure dart through the door of the deckhouse, black for an infinitesimal moment in the moonlight. His automatic rang out, but Udall had disappeared. The shot that greeted the second, slighter figure was luckier, the second man pitched down on to the deck, and lay there, a dark, hunched-up mass in the silver-blue light of the moon. Val's voice, wild with alarm, came from the sofa.

"Jimmy! Oh, God! Are you all right, Jimmy?"

Soutar's voice reassured her.

"Yes, Stay there, Val."

She saw him block up the doorway, and then he was gone, speeding forward towards the footsteps he could hear up on the foc's'l head, and shouting as he ran. He was too late. Before he had run more than a few yards a man's form appeared on the rail at the schooner's bows, poised to dive, and etched clearly against the soft radiance of the sky. Soutar shouted again, and even as he did so, another shot crashed into the silence of the night. The man up in the bows seemed to crumple up; for a moment he tottered on the rail, then fell from sight. Soutar heard the dull splash as he hit the waters of the harbor.

A voice called from somewhere up near the foc's'l head:

"Got him, I think."

"Yes," Soutar replied soberly. "That was Udall. You men had better get down into the boat and see whether you can get the body."

Slowly he turned, and retraced his steps to the deckhouse. The girl was awaiting him at the door, supporting herself against the wall. In the paleness of the moon her face was ghostlike in its pallor; Soutar noticed, with a welling up of love and pity, the deep shadows under her eyes that spoke of the terrific strain of the last few days. When he reached her she collapsed into his arms, sobbing.

"There," he soothed her. "Cry your eyes out, kid. You're safe now, safe as can be."

When she had recovered herself a little she looked up at him with eyes in which the tears still hung heavily.

"But you, Jimmy! I don't understand. What's going to happen to you? That shooting in Sydney! I've been nearly frantic ever since..."

He laughed softly, passing his hand over her rich, wheat-colored hair.

"Forget all about that," he assured her. "I'll explain it all later, when you're rested. But so's you won't worry: It's very rarely that they hang special investigators for an international drug suppression organisation."

He smiled at the look of astonishment on her face, stopping the questions crowding to her lips with the gentle pressure of a hand put playfully across her mouth. Sighing, she allowed her head to fall on to his shoulder. Even if it should prove to be a dream, the moment was very precious.

CHAPTER 18.

"BUT," the man said teasingly, "do you think you're well enough to stand the strain of listening to a long and boring story?"

The girl, lying with her head pillowed on his knees, reached up a quick hand, and caught his nose between her fingers.

"If you think, Jim Soutar, that, just because you are a detective—oh, I'm sorry, a special investigator—you can continue to be mysterious, you're mistaken. I refuse to be left in the dark any longer."

She gave his nose a final tweak, and turned her head so that, with laughing blue eyes, she could watch him fingering gingerly the mislaid organ. Above them a magnolia tree towered, its green leaves casting a delightful shade that kept the heat of the sun at bay. Among the leaves were the large cream-colored flowers, soft, velvet-petalled things, filling the air with their lemon fragrance. At the back of the tree a low-roofed bungalow invited with its wide, airy verandahs, over which rioted the rich gold of allamanda blossom, and the splendid mauve of bougainvillea. The terraced lawn fell away sharply almost at the feet of the two people lounging on the grass, and when they looked down they saw its green grass stretching down to where the crotons grew, their broad or narrow leaves a blaze of color. Hibiscus flamed down there, too, yellow, with maroon centre, scarlet, and a delicate shade of pink.

But the two under the magnolia tree had already exclaimed over the blazing splendor of grass and shrubs and flowers, and were now intent on more personal matters. The girl was still pressing.

"Don't be mean, Jimmy. You must tell me everything; right from the beginning." She settled herself more comfortably. "I'm ready."

"Oh, well," the man said, "I suppose this is a taste of what I'm going to get when we're married."

He leant down and kissed her. It seemed to take quite a long time. When he had recovered his upright position he sat silent for a moment.

"Now then," the girl said. "That's no excuse not to start."

He laughed, and commenced.

"Well, Udall told you all about me up to the time the police trapped us all the night the Frenchman nearly killed that water-policeman. Well, what he told you was true, and it was true, too, that I was sentenced to a term in gaol. But what Udall didn't know was what happened afterwards."

He stopped, as if gathering his ideas together.

"Go on," the girl said.

"Well, I was very lucky, really. It doesn't matter what prison I went to, but the chaplain there was a very decent fellow. He'd heard the story I'd put up at my trial and was interested in it. He came to see me a lot when I first went in, and I must have convinced him that I'd told the truth, because he started to go quietly to work to see what he could do for me. The policeman who'd been knocked on the head that night was just pulling round properly then. My chaplain friend saw him, and that was where my second big slice of luck came in; he'd had a period of consciousness that night, just sufficiently long to hear what was being said by Udall, the Toad, and the others, and to know what I'd done for him. Doctors have told me since that that kind of lucid interval between two long periods of unconsciousness is common enough. He proved to be a very decent fellow; told the padre that he'd already reported the full circumstances to his superiors, and wanted to do all he could to help me."

"To cut a long story short, the chaplain got quite a few big bugs interested. There was an inquiry into the case, and I got a Governor's pardon. But, and this is important, it was hushed up. The newspapers even were not in on it. There'd been a good deal of outcry at that time about one or two pardons that had been granted, and the authorities didn't want to stir up another row. That's one of the reasons why Udall knew nothing about it."

The girl stirred, a strand of her sun-colored hair falling across her eyes. She swept it back with impatient fingers.

"But, surely," she exclaimed, "nobody could have objected to your pardon. You should never have been sentenced. When I think of it, I..."

"Are you going to give an address," her companion laughed, "or shall I carry on?"

"Oh, all right, Mister Soutar. I'm sorry."

She gave his hand a quick squeeze, and he continued.

"Well, there I was with a pardon; free, and with nothing to do, and no ideas except a vague one to get away to the bush, away from all the old crowd. Then the padre turned up, trumps again. He'd been pretty mysterious the few days before I left the gaol, and when I did go he asked me to meet him in town one day the week following. Of course I said I would. We met as arranged, and he said then that he'd like to take me out and show me something he thought would interest me. You'll never guess what it was. A hospital! An institution for nerve patients, it was claimed to be, but, actually, it was practically run for dope addicts. My God! What an afternoon that was. It was awful. The padre let me have a bellyful of it—forced me to, in fact—before he took me away. I never want to pass another hour or two like those. I'd never seen the victims of drugs before."

"When we got back to town the chaplain asked me what I'd thought of it. I told him. Then he sprang the biggest surprise of all on me. Asked me if I'd like to join up with this international organisation I've mentioned to you. Said he could imagine no more noble work. I tell you it made me feel pretty mean, hearing him describe a job he was offering me as 'noble work.' I knew, too, that he must have pulled all kinds of strings to get me the chance of working with such a crowd; they only take men with an absolutely clean record. I suppose my knowledge of crooks, and one

kind of dope running, helped, though. At any rate the chance was there, and I accepted."

"I was lucky in my job, too. I really did feel that I wanted to do everything I could to stop the traffic that was producing poor tortured devils like those I'd seen in the hospital. I managed to pull off one or two little catches, and they confirmed me in my job as a special investigator; up to then I'd been more or less on probation. I tell you, Val, it was a big moment for me when my old chief broke the news to me; I'd been a crook, you see, and I never expected..."

The girl's fingers tightened over his.

"I'd been working as a permanent for some time when we heard a whisper that there was a schooner at Circular Quay, the Alicia, that might not be all she should be. Our information came from the Suva police. They'd heard something about an island and opium-running, and asked us to inquire at our end in conjunction with the police. The chief put me on the job, but I could learn practically nothing. Nobody knew anything but that she was a trading schooner owned by the Inter-Island and Australian Trading Company, and that she brought copra to Sydney."

"She was just about due to clear, and I was still no further ahead. My chief got in touch with Suva, and we arranged that I should stow away, and in that way find out where this island was, and generally, all I could. As the Alicia seemed to call at Suva generally I could land there and report, or if she missed Fiji come back to Sydney. Of course, it was risky, but not so much for me as for others. I'd been a crook, nobody knew that I hadn't just come out of the jug, and I felt that I could carry it through."

"Well, you know the rest. I was caught before the schooner left the wharf. You could have knocked me over with a feather when I saw Udall and the Frenchman. The story of being wanted for murder occurred to me on the spur of the moment, but it turned out that I couldn't have told a better one. There had been a murder, of course."

His voice ceased. They were both silent for a moment until Val asked:

"But, Jimmy, why didn't you tell me all this before?"

"In the first place, I didn't know, at first, that you weren't one of the gang. Afterwards, when I knew you properly, I felt that there was something wrong; you're a good little actress, Val, but you couldn't make me believe that you were a criminal. Then you gave yourself away by asking about Dick Heatherley. I knew all about him and his disappearance; I'd seen photographs of him—we were all keen to find out what had happened to him—and the likeness was too pronounced to be missed. I felt sure that you were engaged on some quixotic venture. But, even then, I was afraid to tell you the truth. Not of you, my darling, but of Udall. Had there been any understanding like that between us he'd have seen it immediately, and then we'd both have been gone. I thought it best to let you keep on thinking me one of the gang, although, believe me, it was hard. I was frightened, too, that at any moment Udall would find out, as he did that you were not what you were supposed to be. That's why I warned you not to leave the Grand Pacific. And it was the first thing you did!"

The girl sat up, with flushed cheeks.

"You don't understand. I was desperate, thinking of you and falling to think of anything to help you. When Udall said he had a plan, I'd have gone anywhere..."

The man's eyes were on her admiringly. "You wonderful kid," he said, and reached for her. She pushed him back, her eyes laughing.

"Finish your story first," she said. "There's a lot more I want to know."

"Oh, well!" he shrugged, and went on.

"We'd arranged before I left Sydney that if anything went wrong I'd leave a message hidden in a certain place on the Alicia, so that when she put in to Suva or Sydney they'd know what happened. Well, when Udall decided to put us ashore on Dope Island I left a note telling briefly what I'd learnt and asking our people in Suva to hold the schooner and send some kind of craft to pick us up. They got it all right when the Alicia came into port here, and as there was nothing to arrest Udall for, and also in the hope of learning more, they hit on the idea of quarantining the schooner until the craft they sent for me got back. I suppose she's still somewhere in mid-ocean. That's how Udall came to be tied up. You may remember, I left you for a minute when we landed on the wharf; I was telephoning to report myself. As soon as they heard from me, quarantine was notified to clear the Alicia."

"The arrest, as you can now see, was a put-up job. Udall had arranged to meet an American crook in Suva, a big man in the dope business in the States. None of us knew who he was, but we were anxious to find out. I tried to get Udall to let me in on the meeting, but he wasn't having any. When I kept on questioning him he became suspicious and put one of the crew—Harry, you remember him—on to watch me. The only way I could be clear of observation was for Udall to think me arrested and held for the murder I was supposed to have committed in Sydney. Well, I arranged it. The only thing I'm sorry for is that I didn't tell you. If I'd only thought..."

Remembering what she had been through his brow clouded.

"Dearest, it came out all right, didn't it?" the girl asked softly. "And you had your duty to think of first."

"Val, I am going to kiss you," he said, and moved to do it, but she still held him off.

"Not until you've finished," she said firmly, "because once you start I'll never want to let you stop."

With this lovely bait hanging before his eyes, the young man plunged headlong into the recital of the little that remained to be told. He described how the Suva police had located the house in the native quarter where the meeting with the American was to be held by shadowing the Frenchman, and how he had arranged for a diversion to occur in the front of the house to lure the three men away and so give him a chance to seize the papers which had supplied the necessary evidence to justify the arrest of the American and Jackson and the raid on the Alicia. He told her of the last meeting with Mister Fu, and, together, they gave the Chinaman the benefit of one kindly thought; unconsciously he had given Soutar information which had brought him on to the Alicia much more swiftly than might otherwise have been the case. At last he stopped.

"That's all," he said. "And now that kiss."

"Just a minute, Jimmy," the girl said. "I insist on having a promise that your padre shall marry us."

"Can't wait," the man replied firmly. "We're having it done here in Suva. This afternoon. Quite painless. Look!"

He waved a license proudly.

"Jimmy! How wonderful!"

Some time later he raised his face from that mass of lovely hair the color of ripe wheat. The sky was bluer than it had ever been, the flowers more brilliantly colored, the mingled scents of jasmine and magnolia much more lovely.

"Darling Val!" he said, and bent over her lips again.

THE END.

(All characters in this novel are fictitious, and have no reference to any living person).

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